



ARIZONA

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND PLAN

FOR

FFY 2006-2007

This Plan describes the CCDF program to be conducted by the State for the period 10/1/05 – 9/30/07. As provided for in the applicable statutes and regulations, the Lead Agency has the flexibility to modify this program at any time, including changing the options selected or described herein.

The official text of the applicable laws and regulations govern, and the Lead Agency acknowledges its responsibility to adhere to them regardless of the fact that, for purposes of simplicity and clarity, the specific provisions printed herein are sometimes paraphrases of, or excerpts and incomplete quotations from, the full text.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 162.57 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

(Form ACF 118 Approved OMB Number: 0970-0114 expires 05-31-2006)

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AMENDMENTS LOG

Child Care and Development Services Plan for
For the period: 10/1/05 -- 9/30/07

SECTION AMENDED	EFFECTIVE/ PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE	DATE SUBMITTED TO ACF	DATE APPROVED BY ACF

Instructions:

- 1) Lead Agency completes the first 3 columns and sends a photocopy of this Log (showing the latest amendment sent to ACF) and the amended section(s) to the ACF Regional contact. A copy of the Log, showing the latest amendment pending in ACF, is retained in the Lead Agency's Plan.
- 2) ACF completes column 4 and returns a photocopy of the Log to the grantee.
- 3) The Lead Agency replaces this page in the Plan with the copy of the Log received from ACF showing the approval date.

Note: This process depends on repeated subsequent use of the same Log page over the life of the Plan. At any time the Log should reflect all amendments, both approved and pending in ACF. The Lead Agency is advised to retain those "old" plan pages that are superseded by amendments in a separate appendix to its Plan.

PART 1

ADMINISTRATION

The agency shown below has been designated by the Chief Executive Officer of the State (or Territory), to represent the State (or Territory) as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency agrees to administer the program in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations and the provisions of this Plan, including the assurances and certifications appended hereto. (658D, 658E)

1.1 Lead Agency Information (as designated by State chief executive officer)

Name of Lead Agency: **Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES)**
Address of Lead Agency: **1717 W. Jefferson**
P.O. Box 6123
Phoenix, Arizona 85005

Name and Title of the Lead Agency's
Chief Executive Officer: **David A. Berns, Director**

Phone & Fax Numbers: **Phone: (602) 542-5678**
Fax: (602) 542-5339

Web Address for Lead Agency (if any): www.de.state.az.us

1.2 State Child Care (CCDF) Contact Information (day-to-day contact)

Name and Title of the
State Child Care Contact (CCDF): **Connie Shorr, Program Administrator**
DES Child Care Administration

Address of Contact: **Site code 801A**
1789 W. Jefferson, 3rd Fl. SW
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Phone & Fax Numbers: **Phone: (602) 542-4248**
Fax: (602) 542-4197
E-Mail Address: **E-Mail: cshorr@azdes.gov**

Phone Number for child care subsidy
program information (for the public) (if any): **(602) 542-4248**

Web Address for child care subsidy program
information (for the public) (if any): www.azdes.gov/childcare/

1.3 Estimated Funding

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amounts will be available for child care services and related activities during the 1-year period: October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006. (§98.13(a))

- CCDF: **\$99,629,148**
- Federal TANF Transfer to CCDF (if known): **\$0**
- Direct Federal TANF Spending on Child Care (if known): **\$8,020,300**
- State CCDF Maintenance of Effort Funds: **\$10,032,936**
- State Matching Funds: **\$14,736,676**
- Total of Funds: **\$132,419,060 (does not include other funds)**

1.4 Estimated Administration Cost

The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount (and percentage) of the CCDF will be used to administer the program (not to exceed 5 percent): **\$ 6,219,938 (5%)**.
(658E(c)(3), §§98.13(a), 98.52)

1.5 Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

- () Yes. – GO to Section 1.8.
(X) No, and the following describes how the Lead Agency maintains overall control when services or activities are provided through other agencies. (658D(b)(1)(A), §98.11)

1.5 Administration of the Program

Does the Lead Agency directly administer and implement all services, programs and activities funded under the CCDF Act, including those described in Part 5.1 – Activities & Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care, Quality Earmarks and Set-Aside?

- ☐ Yes. Skip questions 1.6 and 1.7. Go to Section 1.8.
(X) No, and the following describes how the Lead Agency maintains overall control when services or activities are provided through other agencies: (658D(b)(1)(A), §98.11)

DES has entered into a contract with a private vendor (MAXIMUS, Inc.) to administer Jobs case management, TANF related child care and Transitional Child Care (TCC) in a specified geographic area of Maricopa County. This area is defined (by the DES, Division of Benefits and Medical Eligibility) as District I East.

In this area, residents who are TANF recipients and who need child care assistance to participate in a TANF related work activity, and those who need child care assistance and are eligible for TCC will have their eligibility for services determined by MAXIMUS.

Upon determination of eligibility for these child care programs, MAXIMUS will calculate the appropriate level of child care benefits. MAXIMUS will then provide the DES Child Care Administration with this information. The DES Child Care Administration will maintain the responsibility for issuing Certificates of Authorizations and making provider payments corresponding with the MAXIMUS determination of eligibility.

Individuals who live in this area and who are in need of child care services other than TANF related child care or who are not eligible for TCC will continue to have their eligibility for services determined by the DES Child Care Administration.

Section - 1.5 Administration (continued)

DES plans to issue a *Request For Proposals* (RFP) in 2005 (as required by state statute) to privatize case managed TANF employment and training services on a statewide basis. Multiple contracts will be awarded (state statute prohibits contracting with a single entity statewide). Designated contractors will be responsible for a portion of TANF related child care eligibility limited to only those TANF cases they are otherwise case managing. Contractors will provide the DES Child Care Administration with information to enable calculation of benefits, issuance of Certificates of Authorization, and issuance of provider payments corresponding to the service needs identified by the contractor.

When contracts are awarded as a result of the new RFP in 2005, the service description concerning MAXIMUS, Inc., (on previous page) for the District I East location of Maricopa County in the metropolitan Phoenix area will be superseded by the new service description in the RFP as referenced in the paragraph above).

DES, designated the lead agency by the Governor, will continue to directly administer and implement all other programs funded under the CCDF and will:

1. Determine the basic usage and priorities for CCDF expenditures consistent with Arizona state statute;
2. Promulgate all rules and regulations governing overall administration of the Plan;
3. Submit all reports required by the Secretary;
4. Ensure that the program complies with the approved Plan and all Federal requirements;
5. Oversee the expenditure of funds by contractors;
6. Monitor programs and services;
7. Fulfill the responsibilities of the Grantee in any complaint, compliance hearing or appeals action;
8. Ensure that all State and local or non-governmental agencies through which the State administers the program, including agencies and contractors that determine individual eligibility, operate according to the rules established for the program; and
9. Directly administer and implement all aspects of the Program in the area of paying providers and contractors.

Additionally, certain aspects of administration and implementation of programs and activities, such as efforts to promote early learning, program development (to improve the quality and increase the availability of early childhood development programs and before and after school programs), school-aged child care activities, provider training and technical assistance and the provision of consumer education information and data collection will be shared with other state agencies, following Governor's Napolitano's School Readiness Action Plan.

1.6 Determining Eligibility

For child care services funded under §98.50 (e.g., certificates, vouchers, grants/contracts for slots based on individual eligibility), does the Lead Agency itself: (§98.11)

- Determine individual eligibility of non-TANF families?
☐ Yes.

(X) No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of non-TANF families for child care:

As indicated in Section 1.5, MAXIMUS Inc., a non-governmental community based organization, is responsible for the determination of eligibility for certain non-TANF child care programs (i.e., TCC) in a specified geographic area.

- Determine individual eligibility of TANF families?
☐ Yes.

(X) No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that determines eligibility of TANF families for child care:

As indicated in Section 1.5, MAXIMUS Inc., a non-governmental community based organization, is responsible for the determination of eligibility for TANF child care programs in a specified geographic area.

- Assist parents in locating child care?
☐ Yes.

(X) No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that assists parents:

Both DES and MAXIMUS staff may assist the parents in locating child care. Additionally, parents may be referred to a Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCR&R). The two CCR&R non-governmental community based organizations, which have contracts with DES to provide these services, are:

- **The Association for Supportive Child Care in coalition with the Arizona Child Care Association; and**
- **Child & Family Resources, Inc.**
 - Make payments to providers and/or parents?
(X) Yes.

☐ No. If no, identify the name and type of agency that makes payments:

1.7 Non-Governmental Entities

Is any entity named in response to section 1.6 a non-governmental entity? (658D(b), §§98.10(a), 98.11(a))

☐ Yes

(X) No. DHHS Guidance defines non-governmental entity as one that is controlled entirely by private sources and a public-private partnership as a governmental entity, which would define the following, who are in partnership with the lead agency.

MAXIMUS, Inc.
Association for Supportive Child Care
Child & Family Resources, Inc.

1.8 Use of Private Donated Funds

Will the Lead Agency use private donated funds to meet a part of the matching requirement of the CCDF pursuant to §98.53(e)(2) and (f)?

☐ Yes, The name and type of entity designated to receive private donated funds is:
Name:
Address:
Contact:
Type:

(X) No. GO TO 1.9

1.9 Use of State Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Expenditures for CCDF-Eligible Children

1.9.1 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement?

☐ Yes, and:

() The State assures that its level of effort in full day/full year child care services has not been reduced, pursuant to §98.53(h)(1).

(%) Estimated % of the MOE requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures.

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the MOE requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

(X) No.

1.9.2 During this plan period, will State expenditures for Pre-K programs be used to meet any of the CCDF Matching Fund requirement? (§98.53(h))

(X) Yes, and

(20%) Estimated % of the Matching Fund requirement that will be met with pre-K expenditures. (It may not exceed 20%.)

If the State uses Pre-K expenditures to meet more than 10% of the Matching Fund requirement, the following describes how the State will coordinate its Pre-K and child care services to expand the availability of child care (§98.53(h)(4)):

☐ No.

DES works with the ADE Division of Early Childhood Programs to ensure that individual Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) programs are provided information and are aware of child care services that are available to working parents from DES.

ECBG programs are also eligible and encouraged to enter into a Registration Agreement with DES that allows them to provide services, participate in the CCDF Certificate payment system and be reimbursed for care provided to eligible working parents that goes beyond the duration of the ECBG program. As it is required by state statute that ECBG programs be nationally accredited, if an ECBG program enters into a Registration Agreement with DES to care for subsidized children, the ECBG program is eligible to receive an enhanced rate for this care, as described in Section 3.2. ECBG programs may also be listed with and participate in CCDF funded Child Care Resource and Referral agencies which allows them to be considered as a child care option for parents seeking appropriate services.

Additionally, programs that are participating in the ECBG are required by state statute to follow Arizona Department of Health Services policies regarding licensing requirements and issues. These same licensing requirements apply to all child care centers (including those that receive CCDF funds) as a condition of meeting the Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers specified in Section 6.1 of this Plan.

DES will continue to work with ADE and individual ECBG programs toward expanding efforts in order to assure that services are available to low-income working families.

- 1.9.3 If the State answered yes to 1.9.1 or 1.9.2, the following describes State efforts to ensure that pre-K programs meet the needs of working parents: (§98.53(h)(2))

DES works with the ADE Division of Early Childhood Programs to ensure that individual Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) programs are provided information and are aware of child care services that are available to working parents from DES. ECBG requires schools to partner with private and public child care providers.

Additionally, ECBG grantee schools must notify private and public child care providers in their geographic area of the ability to partner with the schools to provide ECBG-funded preschool services. ECBG school/child care provider partnerships increase access to preschool for low-income working families.

ECBG programs are also eligible and encouraged to enter into a Registration Agreement with DES that allows them to provide services, participate in the CCDF Certificate payment system and be reimbursed for care provided to eligible working parents that goes beyond the duration of the ECBG program. ECBG programs may also be listed with and participate in CCDF funded Child Care Resource and Referral agencies which allows them to be considered as a child care option for parents seeking appropriate services.

Programs that are participating in the ECBG are also required by state statute to follow Arizona Department of Health Services policies regarding licensing requirements and issues. These same licensing requirements apply to all child care centers (including those that receive CCDF funds) as a condition of meeting the Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers specified in Section 6.1 of this Plan.

DES will continue to work with ADE and individual ECBG programs toward expanding efforts in order to assure that services are available to low-income working families.

1.10 Improper Payments

1.10.1 How does the Lead Agency define improper payments?

Improper payments result when clients receive more service than they are entitled to under policy, based on either 1) the misrepresentation/withholding of information needed for accurate eligibility determination or benefit calculation purposes, or 2) utilization of services for unauthorized reasons, or 3) when the other parent in the home was available to provide care.

Improper payments also occur when child care providers 1) bill for days/hours when the children were not in attendance (beyond the allowable two paid absent days per child per month), 2) bill for children who never attended, or 3) bill for more care than was provided (bill for a full day when child in attendance only for a part day).

1.10.2 Has your State developed strategies to prevent, measure, identify, reduce and/or collect improper payments? (§98.60(i), §98.65, §98.67)

(X) Yes, and these strategies are:

- ☐ No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?
- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ No.

The DES Child Care Administration prevents, identifies, & reduces improper payments by:

- **Routinely sharing and reviewing systems data with the state's FAMIS system (for TANF, Food Stamps, and Medical Assistance cases), and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Base Wage automated system to identify and resolve discrepant income or household information either 1) reported by clients to other assistance programs, or 2) reported as wages by employers to the state of Arizona for UI tax purposes.**
- **Routinely accessing online child support payment information from the DES Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) regarding actual child support payment histories and disbursement schedules for known child care clientele.**
- **Utilizing the DES Office of Internal Affairs as needed to substantiate household circumstances and resolve discrepancies regarding information reported by clients and providers, and substantiate improper billings.**
- **Training child care providers on proper billing techniques and conducts reviews on initial billing submittal to ensure that contract provisions are met.**
- **Conducting routine monitoring of existing provider's billing by comparing parental sign in/sign out documents to billing claims to determine if the amount billed is substantiated**
- **Running system reports that flag certain providers whose payments exceed anticipated billings based on provider capacity. Further review of billing practices is initiated based on reports.**

The DES Child Care Administration validates, tracks, and collects improper payments by:

- Pursuing overpayment recoupment with clients for all client caused overpayments, and providers for all provider caused overpayments.
- Pursuing criminal prosecution in all cases of suspected fraud.

1.10.3 Has your State developed strategies to identify errors in the determination of client eligibility?

- (X) Yes, and these strategies are:
☐ No. If no, are there plans underway to determine and implement such strategies?
☐ Yes.
☐ No.

The four basic approaches the DES Child Care Administration uses to identify and/or prevent errors include:

1) Development of a case reading instrument for use by first line field supervisors:

The DES Child Care Administration developed a case reading instrument to identify errors in the elements of the eligibility determination, benefit calculation, and service authorization processes. First line supervisors conduct monthly case reads on a random sample of cases to promote consistent application of eligibility rules and procedures on a statewide basis.

2) Comprehensive child care policy and systems training deployment for new and ongoing child care staff: A comprehensive four week course of integrated policy and systems training on the Child Care Program is another strategy to prevent case management errors. All child care case managers are required to participate in the Child Care Basic Skills course upon being hired by the DES Child Care Administration. Additionally, the DES Child Care Administration conducts refresher trainings and training sessions on new policy and systems initiatives to provide support to case managers on an ongoing basis.

3) Utilization of reconciliation reports to identify/resolve case processing discrepancies: The DES Child Care Administration also utilizes reconciliation reports to identify discrepancies in systems data elements. Reports of this nature assist management in identifying potential errors made by field staff during the eligibility determination or service authorization processes. Identified errors are either corrected on a case by case basis in the field, or statewide policy clarifications are issued for broader impact regarding error prevention or resolution.

4) Full time policy and systems helpdesks for direct case management support: Staff can call with policy or system questions to ensure appropriate application of policy and/or for assistance in determining eligibility or improper payment.

PART 2 DEVELOPING THE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

2.1 Consultation and Coordination

- 2.1.1 Lead Agencies are required to *consult* with appropriate agencies and *coordinate* with other Federal, State, local, tribal (if applicable) and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services (§98.12, §98.14(a),(b), §98.16(d)). Indicate the entities with which the Lead Agency has consulted or coordinated (as defined below), by checking the appropriate box(es) in the following table.

Consultation involves the participation of an appropriate agency in the development of the State Plan. At a minimum, Lead Agencies must consult with representatives of general purpose local governments (noted by the asterisk in the chart below).

Coordination involves the coordination of child care and early childhood development services, including efforts to coordinate across multiple entities, both public and private (for instance, in connection with a State Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant or infant-toddler initiative). At a minimum, Lead Agencies must coordinate with (1) other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and/or private agencies responsible for providing child care and early childhood development services, (2) public health (including the agency responsible for immunizations and programs that promote children's emotional and mental health), (3) employment services / workforce development, (4) public education, and (5) Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and (5) any Indian Tribes in the State receiving CCDF funds (noted by the asterisks in the chart below).

	Consultation	Coordination
• Representatives of local government	(X) *	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Indian Tribes/Tribal Organizations, when such entities exist within the boundaries of the State	(X)	(X)
• Other Federal, State, local, Tribal (if applicable), and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services.	(X)	(X) *
• State/Tribal agency (agencies) responsible for		
○ Public health	(X)	(X) *
○ Employment services / workforce development	(X)	(X) *
○ Public education	(X)	(X) *
○ TANF	(X)	(X) *
○ State pre-kindergarten programs	(X)	(X)
○ Head Start programs	(X)	(X)
○ Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	(X)
• Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	(X)

* Required.

For each box checked above, (a) identify the agency providing the service and (b) describe the consultation and coordination efforts, if any. Descriptions must be provided for any consultation or coordination required by statute or regulation.

In Arizona, child care services are administered at the state level, consistent with state legislation and budgetary appropriations. Organizations and individuals have the opportunity to communicate and provide input to their local elected officials in order to influence legislation and appropriations for child care services and programs. Additionally, utilizing input and direction from various sources, the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) plans for the provision and delivery of CCDF services in a manner that is responsive to the needs of Arizona's communities.

Within this subsection, description is provided of some of the numerous committees and boards, which are involved at various levels in planning and/or provision of early care and education services and consult in the development of the CCDF State Plan. These include: the DES Child Care Advisory Committee, Arizona School Readiness Board and associated Implementation Teams (such as the Health Implementation Team), Tri-Agency Committee, DES Early Childhood Taskforce, Early Childhood and Provider Network Meetings and DES Community Network Teams. Following are descriptions of the purpose and efforts of these committee and boards. Information is specifically provided in terms of consultation and coordination efforts for each entity involved.

DES Child Care Advisory Committee - For issues related to ongoing service delivery and development of the CCDF State Plan, DES consults with the Child Care Advisory Committee (CCAC), which typically meets 4 times per year. The CCAC includes individuals that represent statewide organizations with local affiliations, tribes, cities and councils of governments that administer federal early childhood services.

The CCAC is provided with information on the level of service being provided, issues regarding service delivery and any other available information that impacts early care and education programs in the state. The CCAC provides recommendations to DES on programs and on activities and services to improve the quality and availability of child care, which are funded using CCDF Quality earmarks and Set-Asides.

Coordination with other early childhood development programs, before and after school care programs and child care resource and referral agencies is also facilitated through the CCAC. The mission of the CCAC is to make recommendations to DES that will promote quality, affordable, available child care through a comprehensive, coordinated and integrated child care and early childhood delivery system in Arizona. The committee meets on a regular basis in order to review federal regulations, discuss issues and options, assess the availability of child care, prevent duplication and identify child care program linkages.

Members of the CCAC have included representatives of: representatives of local government, other federal, State, local, tribal and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services such as Head Start programs; resource and referral agencies; child welfare advocacy groups; tribal organizations; family child care providers; human service advocacy organizations; employer supported child care programs; Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors; parents/consumers; school boards; before and after school programs; public school child care programs; business groups; sectarian organizations and child care programs; Child Development Associate programs; and organizations that accredit child care programs.

Additionally, representatives from state agencies including the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF), the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) and the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) also participate in the CCAC. (GOCYF includes the Arizona State Board on School Readiness, Division for Community and Youth Development, Division for Children, Division for Women, and the Division for Substance Abuse and Prevention. ADE administers Preschool Handicapped, Title I, and the Child and Adult Care Food programs. The DHS administers the Office of Child Care Licensure, Behavioral Health Services and the Office of Women and Children's Health.)

Governor's School Readiness Board - The Arizona State School Readiness Board, convened in March 2003 by Governor Janet Napolitano, was charged with developing a plan to coordinate and improve Arizona's early care and education system, which includes the use of the CCDF. The Board developed recommendations for the Governor to consider in her School Readiness Board Action Plan, which the Governor presented in January 2004. The Plan was developed with input from one hundred forty-four business and community leaders, child care, head start, education and health professionals, tribal and state agency officials representing public health, employment services and TANF, public education and state-pre kindergarten programs, and elected officials from across the State. The Plan envisions an Arizona where all children begin 1st grade safe, healthy and ready to succeed and sets forth action items for the next five years. For additional program planning efforts and recent outcomes being directed by the Arizona State Board on School Readiness (see Sections 2.1.2 State Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination and Part 5-Activities and Services to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care):

School Readiness Board's Health Implementation Team and the Statewide Early Childhood Comprehensive System - The Governor's Office and the Department of Health Services, Office of Women's and Children's Health collaborated to apply for the Statewide Early Childhood Comprehensive System (SECCS) grant. This grant funds planning and implementation over a five year period of time to include parent education, family support, access to medical home, social emotional development, and child care in a statewide cost-effective, comprehensive system. Arizona is in the second year of planning under this grant. A portion of the grant funds part of the staff of the School Readiness Board.

A cross-section of urban/rural community representatives (business, academic, civic, tribal, community-based organizations, state agencies, for-profit and not-for-profit entities) has engaged in the work of School Readiness Board Policy Work Groups and Implementation Teams. The system is envisioned as a combination of public and private efforts and will require the ongoing cooperation and collaboration of all parties. One of the Implementation Teams is charged with design of the Coordination of the Early Childhood Education system, to include overall governance of the system in order to ensure alignment of state and federal funding streams.

In specific, the following agencies and entities are involved: the Department of Health Services' Office of Women's and Children's Health and Office of Oral Health; the Department of Economic Security, Child Care Administration, Arizona Early Intervention Program and Child Protective Services; the Department of Education; the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (Medicaid); United Way organizations; Healthy Child Care Arizona; the Arizona Chapter of the Academy of Pediatrics; Reach Out and Read; Healthy Steps; and many others.

Healthy Child Care Arizona - Healthy Child Care Arizona is a partnership between child care center staff, families, and Child Care Health Consultants (CCHCs) that focuses on developing comprehensive and coordinated services in child care settings. With the School Readiness Board's focus on quality early care and education, the Statewide Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Planning Grant and the work of Healthy Child Care Arizona since 1997, is moving forward to

implement a state-wide health consultation system that leverages existing resources and coordinates existing systems of care for young children for the purpose of advocating for healthy and safe child care. Currently, there is only one Child Care Health Consultant in the state. The long term goal is to be able to first offer consultation to any licensed child care center in Arizona, then to any out-of-home child care setting.

Tri-agency Committee – The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) Child Care Administration also participates in a Tri-agency Committee. This committee is made up of representatives from Arizona Department of Education, Arizona Department of Economic Security and Arizona Department of Health Services. The Committee's work is directed toward achieving a greater degree of consumer protection, and improved quality of child care services through interagency communication, coordination and consistency, as specified in the School Readiness Action Plan.

DES Early Childhood Taskforce - DES is unique in that it combines most of the state's social service programs within a single agency. These include: Child Care Assistance, Employment services, Part C of the federal Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities program, food stamps, cash assistance (TANF), child support enforcement, and child welfare. The DES Early Childhood Task Force was established to mobilize DES early childhood programs, resources and initiatives in a manner that promotes interdepartmental coordination and communication and facilitates interagency collaboration and system integration in concert with many of DES strategic initiatives in addition to implementation and coordination of School Readiness Action Plan initiatives.

Early Childhood and Provider Network Meetings - Agencies that provide Child Care Resource and Referral services, in partnership with DES, facilitate local involvement in early care and education issues through Early Childhood and Provider Network meetings. Representatives from community organizations, higher education, governments and the provider community meet regularly to exchange information, identify local child care needs and resources and share strategies to improve the quality of care.

DES Community Network Teams - Within each county there is one or more DES Community Network Teams (CNT) whose purpose is to assess local DES service delivery, and to provide input, feedback and recommendations to DES for improvements. The CNT provides oversight for DES local operations and addresses issues within the community related to DES services; identifies gaps in services between programs DES offers and others within the community and looks for ways to fill the gaps. *Membership includes:* consumers, neighborhood/ community-based/faith-based organization leaders, private agencies (e.g. United Ways, universities, and non-profit providers), business/employment leaders, local elected and appointed officials, human service delivery system representatives, health care provider representatives, education community representatives, law enforcement representatives and prevention service providers.

In terms of consultation and coordination efforts, the following provides information specific to various entities indicated on the table in the Section on page 15.

Representatives of local governments - Through the local and statewide committees and boards described in the previous pages, DES consults with representatives of local governments who serve in various capacities on local and statewide committees and boards described in the previous pages.

Native American Tribes/ Tribal Organizations - DES participates in the Tribal Early Childhood Working Group that has been established and is facilitated by the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona. This group's membership includes representatives from Indian Nations/reservations in Arizona, who are directly involved in the administration and development of early childhood development and child care programs. The group has adopted a set of guidelines identifying the improvement of coordination and quality child care as two of its goals. DES uses this forum to communicate with Tribal child care and CCDF grantees to discuss issues and needs and to provide technical assistance as requested. DES also meets as needed with individual representatives of Tribal TANF and tribal employment programs in order to discuss child care issues and needs.

Other Federal, State, local, Tribal and private agencies providing child care and early childhood development services - In addition to consulting with various entities in drafting the CCDF State Plan, DES provides representatives of local governments, including Tribal organizations the opportunity to comment on the provision of services under the CCDF Plan at public hearings. Additionally, DES coordinates with multiple federal, state, local, tribal and early childhood development services that provide and deliver early childhood services such as Head Start and child care.

Public Health - DES consults with the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) in development of the CCDF State Plan. Additionally, DES coordinates the delivery of early childhood services with DHS. Examples include the ongoing communication regarding the licensing status of DHS licensed child care centers and DHS certified child care group homes, and through coordination of services and system improvement through the work of the Tri-agency Committee, the School Readiness Board and related Implementation Teams, Statewide Early Childhood Comprehensive System grant and Healthy Child Care Arizona.

Public Education - State pre-kindergarten programs - DES consults with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) in development of the CCDF State Plan. Additionally, DES coordinates the delivery of early childhood services with ADE. See section 5.2 for more information.

DES is also involved with the Arizona School-Age Care Coalition, a private not for profit organization that promotes high quality care for children and youth during their out-of school time, in order to receive and distribute information regarding school age child care services for children throughout the state. This coalition works closely with the Governor's Office for Children Youth and Families and has established the Arizona the Arizona Out-of-School Time Network to focus on policy development and advocacy. The DES Child Care Administration is a partner in the Network which includes representatives from out-of-school time programs from various regions in the state, state agencies, School Districts, institutions of higher learning, Boys and Girls Clubs, 4H , City Parks and Recreation entities, YMCA's Libraries for the Future, Associations of Governments, charter schools, and other organizations interested in the provision of out-of-school time care.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Employment Service/Workforce Development - In Arizona, DES is the lead agency responsible for administration of the TANF program and Employment services/Workforce Development. The DES Child Care Administration

(CCA) is responsible for the planning and policy of the CCDF and the day-to-day operation of child care programs, which will provide services to TANF cash assistance recipients and other families eligible for services.

The Child Care Administration is an administration within the DES Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Service (DERS). Also within DERS are the Rehabilitation Services Administration and Employment Security Administration (which consists of the employment and training services that support and assist TANF and non-TANF individuals secure and maintain employment). Coordination within DERS has resulted in shared communication and identification of issues that relate to the provision of child care services to families that are receiving other services from the respective DERS Administrations.

Coordination with Employment and Workforce Development services and TANF eligibility is handled internally through policies and procedures developed specifically for the purpose of ensuring that appropriate child care services are provided for TANF recipients.

Head Start programs - DES transfers state funds to provide the required “match” for the Head Start Collaboration Project, which is within the Governor's Office of Children Youth and Families under the auspices of the Arizona School Readiness Board. The Head Start Collaboration Project’s purpose is to increase the collaboration between Head Start grantees, delegates, and other early care and education providers to more efficiently and effectively utilize resources to promote healthy families and children who are healthy, eager to learn, and successful upon entering the K-12 system. In collaboration with the Arizona School Readiness Board, the Head Start State Collaboration office focuses on the eight priority areas: children with disabilities, child care, community service activities, education, family literacy, health care, services for children who are homeless and welfare. The primary focus of the Arizona Head Start Association and the collaboration office is to create a seamless system of early care and education services by integrating the key elements of Head Start programs into the development of an early childhood system for the state. DES contracts with Head Start programs that provide child care as part of service delivery.

Programs that promote inclusion for children with special needs -

- Part C Program of the federal Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities program - DES is the lead agency for the Part C program (Arizona Early Intervention Program-AzEIP). AzEIP is a statewide system of supports and services for families of infants and toddlers, birth to three years of age, with disabilities or delays. The purpose of early intervention is to help families’ help their children develop to their full potential. The DES Child Care Administration coordinates with AzEIP to improve services and service coordination for infants and toddlers and their families.
- Child Care - Contracts for child care slots are limited to specialized services for the provision of child care to children with special needs. These contracts are issued through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which is open to all types of child care providers. Services available pursuant to this RFP are available at certain child care centers.

2.1.2 State Plan for Early Childhood Program Coordination. Good Start, Grow Smart encourages States to develop a plan for coordination across early childhood programs. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts in this area.

- ☐ **Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ **Developing.** A plan is being drafted. The draft is included as Attachment _____
- ☐ **Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as Attachment _____
- (X) **Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as **Attachment A**
- ☐ **Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State planning for coordination across early childhood programs since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

Indicate whether there is an entity that is responsible for ensuring that such coordination occurs. Indicate the four or more early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are coordinated and describe the nature of the coordination.

Describe the results or expected results of this coordination. Discuss how these results relate to the development and implementation of the State's early learning guidelines, plans for professional development, and outcomes for children.

Describe how the State's plan supports or will support continued coordination among the programs. Are changes anticipated in the plan?

In March 2003, Governor Napolitano convened the Arizona State Board on School Readiness. The Board's purpose is to develop a coordinated, efficient, and cost effective delivery system for early childhood programs in Arizona. The Arizona State Board on School Readiness and appropriate state agency directors are charged with ensuring that coordination across early childhood programs occurs. The early childhood programs and/or funding streams that are included in the plan include CCDF, Head Start, Early Head Start, TANF, Maternal Child Health, Early Childhood Block Grant, State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant, Medicaid, Child and Adult Food Program, public school programs and early intervention services.

The State School Readiness Board priority recommendations, presented to the Governor in December 2003, were used to develop the Governor's 5-year School Readiness Action Plan.

In her 2004 State of the State address, Governor Napolitano outlined her early education agenda which included the phase-in of full day kindergarten, increasing well-child health screening and immunizations, developing a quality rating system, increasing funding for child care, creating scholarships for early education teachers, designing a master teachers program, emphasizing early literacy and additional funding for Healthy Families. The School Readiness

Action Plan can be found as Attachment A and also at the website:

http://www.governor.state.az.us/cyf/school_readiness/index_school_readiness.html

In 2004, in order to implement the recommendations contained in the plan, Governor Napolitano charged the Board with developing five implementation teams to move forward key action areas from the plan. The first steps of the School Readiness Action Governor's Action Plan and efforts taken to date are:

1) Provide parent education and family support programs that strengthen families and promote school readiness.

Action Taken to Date:

- **Family Support/ Healthy Families projects:** Procured additional state funds in FY 2005 for Healthy Families Programs. For FY 2006, the Governor's budget recommended an increase in funding to continue expansion of the program from 48 to 73 sites throughout Arizona to serve almost 6,500 families.
- **Literacy projects:** Distributed an Americorps pre-K-3 Literacy grant. Distributed books to students including *This House is Made of Mud*, to every 1st grade student in 2004 and *Confetti* book given to all 1st graders in 2005.
- **Parent Education:** Working with Virginia G. Piper Foundation and Child Abuse Prevention Fund to identify funding for development & distribution of parent information and resource kits based on "I Am Your Child" kits.

2) Improve children's access to health care by increasing the number of children who receive well-child health screens.

Action Taken to Date: - Provided training for child care teachers on oral health. Arizona's Medicaid program is now including emphasis on developmental screening and early literacy along with other health screenings and immunizations in contracts with Health Plans. Worked with Arizona Department of Health Services to train more than 50 health providers in child development & to prepare legislation to mandate hearing screen for all newborns (legislation passed)

3) Offer child care providers and preschools access to a nurse health consultant.

Action Taken to Date: A federal Healthy Child Care grant funded the preliminary design of a child care health consultation system to provide access to a nurse for child care providers. For child care providers, a Child Care Health and Safety Manual draft has been completed. Health consultation is a component of the Quality Rating System, which started in Tucson in March 2005.

4) Improve the quality of early childhood education and inform parents of the quality of programs.

Action Taken to Date:

- **Quality Licensing for Child Care Centers and Group Homes:** Added 5 additional Licensing Surveyors in SFY 2005 and in the Governor's budget requested 6.5 additional licensing surveyors in SFY 2006.
- **Quality Rating System:** A policy work group and implementation team (Quality Rating System Team) completed work on the parameters of this system. A decision was made to phase in a quality rating system, using as a platform an Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA)

Discretionary grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services that was awarded to the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona. The authors of the grant served on the Quality Rating Team and the grant was designed to align local implementation with the action steps in the Governor's School Readiness Plan and the recommendations of the Quality Rating Team. The Quality Levels include criteria that relates to professional development, staff child interaction, and elements of the Early Childhood Program Guidelines and the Arizona Early Childhood Education Standards as indicators for learning environment. Plans include assessment of the child care programs to determine a quality rating level and an overall evaluation of the quality rating program. During this grant period, which started December 2004, the quality rating system will be implemented in 50 child care centers in Arizona. The grant period ends August 2006, by which time plans will be made to expand the Quality Rating System beyond the initial planning area.

- **Improve infant-toddler child care:** Procured technical assistance grant from US Department of Health and Human Service, Child Care Bureau and convened strategic planning group that set goals to improve quality of infant/toddler care. Under the grant, the Infant/Toddler Team is working to: Define work competencies for child care providers; Establish competency-based training continuum for child care providers; Establish minimum competency-based training standards for licensed and certified child care providers; Infuse consideration of Infant/Toddler issues into all relevant School Readiness Board activities.

5) Increase the pool and retention of qualified early childhood professionals by building a statewide scholarship program, instituting an Early Education Emerging Leaders program and through a wage enhancement program.

Action Taken to Date:

- **Scholarships:** Provided 300 Early Childhood Education (ECE) teacher scholarships through \$1.6 M Early Childhood Professional Development Grant to School Readiness Board (SRB) and Arizona State University from US Dept of Education; Targeted \$250,000 of Workforce Investment (WIA) funds for additional ECE scholarships in 2005 specifically targeted to family child care providers in rural communities of the state. Procured an additional \$433,000 of WIA funds, which will be used to launch SEEDS – Scholarships for Early Education Development – a scholarship program similar to TEACH¹. The SRB is working with DES to integrate SEEDS and Career Pathways. Career Pathways has provided ECE Scholarships with \$500,000 of CCDF funds since 1992.
- **Leadership development:** School Readiness Board, Southwest Human Development (local non profit agency) & the Head Start Association acquired \$120,000 grant from Head Start Bureau and began Leadership Program for 30 ECE directors/managers; Procured private funding of \$250,000 from Bank One/Chase for a second and third year of the leadership development class.
- **Improve wages & Benefits:** A team made up of School Readiness Board, Children's Action Alliance, Association for Supportive Child Care, Arizona Community Foundation, Arizona Department of Education, Arizona Child Care Association and DES will complete on research that will update the 2002 Wage & Benefit Survey and expand it to include analysis of ECE teacher credentials. Publication is anticipated Summer, 2005.

¹ Under the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) additional training is linked to higher wages for child care providers. Additional information can be found at: <http://nccic.org/ccpartnerships/profiles/teach.htm>

6) Help families who earn low wages to afford the cost of childcare. The state provides a portion of the payment for childcare for children of poor families who have incomes up to 165% of the federal poverty level.

Action Taken to Date: Due to budget shortfalls, a waiting list for child care subsidies began in March 2003. The Governor worked successfully with the legislature to appropriate funding to reduce the waiting list in state fiscal year (SFY) 2005 and eliminate it by SFY 2006.

7) Enhance students' chances of academic success by phasing-in voluntary full-day kindergarten for all Arizona children.

Action Taken to Date: For SFY 2005 & SFY 2006, the Governor was successful in working with the legislature to appropriate state general funds to begin and then expand voluntary full-day kindergarten with children attending schools with more than 85% of students eligible for the free/reduced price lunch program. Arizona requires that schools provide voluntary half-day kindergarten.

8) Increase the state's investment in high quality preschool by redirecting the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) to high quality preschool, as full-day kindergarten is phased-in.

Action Taken to Date: Analyzed Early Childhood Block Grant funds (state general funds) and made recommendations to improve efficiency and targeting; the Governor requested \$2 million for preschool in SFY 2006 budget.

9) Create public-private partnerships to build the capacity of local communities to provide quality early childhood education.

Action Taken to Date: The Arizona Early Education Fund was recently established at the Arizona Community Foundation and Tucson Community Foundation/United Way to help communities statewide build the quality and capacity of early care and education programs for children birth to age five. This Fund was established by Governor Napolitano and the State School Readiness Board to support child health, literacy, ECE professional development and quality enhancement of programs for children birth to age 5. Through the School Readiness Board, DES collaborates with the Arizona Early Education Fund.

Additional activities related to the Fund: Held Governor's Roundtables for the Early Education Fund in Phoenix, Tucson & Flagstaff; Hosted Governor's Business Forum on Early Childhood Education for 100 CEO's with Governor Napolitano, North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt and Federal Reserve Vice President Art Rolnick.

The School Readiness Board & Arizona Early Education Fund convened a Design Team that includes the United Way (Phoenix & Tucson), Children's Action Alliance, Southwest Human Development, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Office For Children With Special Health Care Needs- Community Development Initiative Parent Led Teams as well as the Chair of the School Readiness Board and Program Committee of the Arizona Early Education Fund, to design a local delivery mechanism for \$1million of private funds and creating a pathway for eventual public funds.

10) Coordinate early childhood education functions between state agencies, Head Start and Tribes.

Action Taken to Date:

- **Under the auspices of the School Readiness Board, the Governor convened a Coordination Team made up of representatives from state agencies, Head Start and Tribes. The Coordination Team reviewed the implementation plans proposed by the other Implementation teams, identified barriers to implementation, and provided input on implementation strategies which are included in the first steps listed above (1 – 9). The Team will coordinate with the CCDF, Head Start, TANF, and Early Childhood Block Grant Preschool and other early childhood programs to facilitate the development of a coordinated early care and education system and to promote new strategies to enhance the coordination and financing of early childhood programs.**
- **Ensure efficient use of funds: Procured State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (SECCS) grant and integrated with School Readiness Board Plan; Completed analysis and made recommendations regarding Early Childhood Education funds including CCDF, Early Childhood Block Grant Preschool Funds, Child and Adult Care Food Program Funds, and funding related to child care licensing. Began an analysis of Quality Set-Aside funding activities and completed an environmental scan of existing services.**
- **Develop accountability system: School Readiness Board (SRB) adopted the Arizona Department of Education early childhood standards; Arizona Children's Action Alliance (a non profit advocacy organization for families and children) School Readiness Indicators report was completed and incorporated into the School Readiness Board accountability measures Arizona Department of Health Services has revised child care group home health and safety regulations and is in the process of revising child care center health and safety regulations.**
- **Coordinate Early Childhood Education functions under auspices of SRB: Governor established Children's Cabinet (made up of state agency directors), SRB Director is member and reports on SRB plan, including progress on the development of the Quality Rating System Arizona; Inter-Tribal Council hosts conference on school readiness; Maintain Head Start Collaboration Office; Hold four SRB meetings annually; State agencies and Head Start meet monthly to coordinate ECE functions; DES implemented ECE focused collaboration among various services and programs within DES, convened the Infant Mental Health workgroup.**

2.2 Public Hearing Process

Describe the Statewide public hearing process held to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the provision of child care services under this Plan. (658D(b)(1)(C), §98.14(c)) At a minimum, the description must provide:

Date(s) of statewide notice of public hearing:

Manner of notifying the public about the statewide hearing:

Date(s) of public hearing(s):

Hearing site(s):

How the content of the plan was made available to the public in advance of the public hearing(s):

A brief summary of the public comments from this process is included as **Attachment B**.

On May 2, 2005, the DES Child Care Administration filed formal notice of the Public Hearing with the Office of the Secretary of State. Additionally, on May 12, 2005, the DES Public Information Office issued a News Release to numerous media outlets publicizing the Public Hearings. Notice of the Public Hearings was also posted in all Child Care Eligibility offices throughout the state and on the DES Website. Copies of the notice were also e-mailed to other parties such as: the DES Child Care Advisory Committee and other groups that may have an interest in child care.

Public Hearings were held on May 23, 2005 in Phoenix, Arizona, on May 26, 2005 in Tucson, Arizona. A brief summary from this process is included in Attachment B.

Copies of the draft Plan were available for review, prior to the hearings, at DES District Child Care Offices and on the DES Website. This information was specified in the News Release and in the Notice of the Public Hearings.

2.3 Public-Private Partnerships

Describe (1) the activities, including planned activities, to encourage public-private partnerships that promote private-sector involvement in meeting child care needs, and (2) the results or expected results of these activities. (658D(b)(1), §98.16(d))

Whenever possible, DES will administer the child care program in a manner that will improve the availability, affordability and quality of child care and promote public/private partnerships. DES intends to maintain such efforts and continue to support and encourage public/private collaborations.

Three significant public-private partnerships are the result of efforts that were originally sponsored by the Bank of America and United Way of America's Success By 6 Initiative. These efforts have moved forward and expanded with financial support from Bank One; financial and volunteer support from Snell and Wilmer Foundation, a local law firm; Virginia G. Piper Foundation, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Administration for Children and Families Early Learning Opportunity Act funds. These initiatives feature partnerships between business, higher education, philanthropic organizations, federal, state and city government and the non-profit sector. The DES Child Care Administration is an active participant in these efforts. The following provides a brief summary of these Public-Private Partnerships and their recent outcomes and plans.

The Valley of the Sun United Way (VSUW) Partners for Arizona's Children is a multi-sector collaborative partnership including representatives from the business, government, philanthropy, nonprofit, faith, education, early care and advocacy communities. Each partner plays a unique role in the efforts of Success By 6—providing resources including time, knowledge, networking, expertise, funding, technology and influence.

In the last year, Success By 6 has continued to evolve as the momentum around early childhood in Arizona has continued to grow. Originally a Maricopa County-based effort, the Partner's for Arizona's Children - Success By 6 Partnership has grown to become a broad-based statewide partnership. The overall long-term objectives of the Partnership Success By 6 initiatives are to:

- Increase public will to invest in children ages 0-6 through research driven public awareness;**
- Increase access to services by supporting, replicating and augmenting quality early care in the community.**

Below is a description of the specific strategies that will be implemented.

Strategy 1: Social Marketing

Goals:

- Develop a statewide partnership with the goal of increasing public will to invest in children.**
- Create a comprehensive, statewide communications plan and theme for the campaign.**

Results: The Development of “You’re It” Arizona

The Partnership conducted extensive research within other markets throughout the country to determine best practices in developing a communications plan geared toward increasing public will to invest in children. Once this research was compiled, the Partnership engaged a professional marketing/public relations team to begin development of Arizona's campaign. The development efforts included the following:

- Statewide research and outreach meetings.**

- Engagement of over 100 individuals representing business, nonprofit, government, faith, education and provider communities.
- One-to-One meetings with many key stakeholders.
- Review of “Best Practices” in other markets and literature on evaluation of social marketing/public awareness efforts on the issue.

The Partnership—with input from across the state—identified a theme for the campaign, which is the starting point for the roll out of a long-term, unified message for young children in our state. The theme—“You’re It”—was chosen because of its appeal to many audiences, its relevance in many cultures, and because it implies the game of tag—calling people from all backgrounds to action on behalf of children with a targeted market of business leaders, human resource professionals, community leaders, and parents. Work has begun on the call to action, collateral materials and website hosting the “You’re It” messages.

The localized United Way of America Born Learning Campaign will begin roll out in spring 2005. As part of the campaign, DES contracted child care resource and referral agencies will respond to parent questions as a result of radio and television ads about focusing on using everyday moments as teaching moments.

Strategy 2: Research

Goals: Identify key research questions necessary for creating an economic impact frame on early learning issues.

- Engage with a local research partner with the capacity to conduct the study.
- Work with identified research partner and initiative partners to gather, analyze and produce data and baseline measures relevant to early care and its economic impacts—short and longer term.

Results: The Economics of Early Care in Arizona

The Partnership commissioned the ASU Center for Business Research to conduct the study entitled: The Economics of Early Care and Education in Arizona. The study included an analysis of the Economic Impact of the Child Care Industry, Impact of the Industry on Labor Force Participation, Cost Benefit Analysis of a Hypothetical Early Childhood Program in Arizona, and Demographic Projections and the Demand for Child Care in Arizona and has been disseminated to over 2,000 community stakeholders and is featured on the Valley of the Sun United Way’s website (See link at <http://www.vsuw.org/resources/data/learning.asp>).

Strategy 3: Community Based Projects

Following an initial pilot implemented in 2003 designed to increase access to quality early care services in Roosevelt School District, the Phoenix Advisory Council on Early Childhood, VSUW and five partnering agencies initiated the expansion of the Early Learning Connections Project in fall 2004 to include Fowler, Cartwright and Pendergast School Districts with strategies including community mobilization, school transition, public awareness, parent education and empowerment, and quality improvement. Other statewide efforts associated with Success By 6 efforts include the piloting of quality rating system in Pima County (see more detail in section below) and Success By 6 continued activities related to quality improvement efforts in the community of Queen Creek.

In Tucson & Southern Arizona

As described in Section 2.1.2, the Governor's State School Readiness Board (SRB), Department of Economic Security (DES) and Department of Health Services (DHS) are working with United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona (UWTSA) through a \$1 million Early Learning Opportunities Act (ELOA) Discretionary Grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services to phase-in the quality rating system in 50 childcare centers in Tucson and at least one child care center in Pinal County, Phoenix, Flagstaff and Mesa. UWTSA designed the grant to align local implementation with the action steps in the Governor's School Readiness Plan and as an opportunity to implement the strategies designed by the Quality Rating Team.

This grant paves the way for the creation of a statewide voluntary quality rating system to enhance the quality of early childhood education and thereby help ensure that children start school ready to succeed. Implementation of the Pima County quality rating system "Early Innovation" began in February 2005 and will run through August 2006.

UWTSA has a proven track record. Using private and public funds, they developed and implemented the First Focus on Kids initiative, which has increased the number of nationally accredited child care centers, supplied over 25,000 developmentally and culturally appropriate books to children, and expanded community awareness of the importance of early learning over the last 4 years.

The UWTSA "Early Innovation" is one of many examples of Arizona's strong public-private partnerships. Sparked and sustained by the leadership of the Governor's Office, partner state and community agencies will continue to work together to develop and test the implementation of a quality rating system. Lessons learned from this undertaking will be used to guide the modification and expansion of a quality rating system statewide. In fact, the implementation of this Quality Rating System will contribute to innovations in the field on a national level.

DES' collaboration with and support of the three United Way initiatives demonstrates a collective commitment to partner on important community issues. It also corresponds with the goal of improving the safety and well-being of children and families, and; confirms that quality child care is an important State issue that has a long-term impact on our children and the development of our future workforce.

PART 3
CHILD CARE SERVICES OFFERED

3.1 Description of Child Care Services

3.1.1 Certificate Payment System

Describe the overall child care certificate process, including, at a minimum:

- (1) a description of the form of the certificate (98.16(k));
- (2) a description of how the certificate program permits parents to choose from a variety of child care settings by explaining how a parent moves from receipt of the certificate to choice of the provider; (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii), 658P(2), 98.2, 98.30(c)(4) & (e)(1) & (2)) and
- (3) if the Lead Agency is also providing child care services through grants and contracts, estimate the mix of \$98.50 services available through certificates versus grants/contracts, and explain how it ensures that parents offered child care services are given the option of receiving a child care certificate. (98.30(a) & (b)) This may be expressed in terms of dollars, number of slots, or percentages of services.

A Certificate of Authorization form is issued to an eligible family and includes the following information: Family identifying data, name and address of provider selected by the family; dates of authorization; level of reimbursement to be provided by DES; amount of DES required co-payment; amount of care authorized (i.e., number of full and/or part days); names and ages of children authorized; and the name and telephone number of the DES Child Care Specialist responsible for issuing the certificate. An example of a Certificate of Authorization is provided as Attachment C.

Eligible families are informed that they may choose, and use their Certificate of Authorization with any type of category of eligible providers. (Families who receive child care for protective services, as defined in Appendix 2 (5) a., may not use non-certified relative providers).

100% of the payments for services are made through the Certificates of Authorizations. Contracted services are available for children with special needs; however, the services are still operated under the Certificate of Authorization system.

When a family is determined eligible to receive services, the family is authorized for a specific amount of care and level of reimbursement for such care. When a family has selected a provider who is registered with DES, a Certificate of Authorization is issued. Services through contract are handled in a similar manner.

If the family has not yet selected a provider (when determined eligible) the family will be advised to notify their Child Care specialist when a selection is made. If the selected provider has a Registration Agreement, a Certificate of Authorization is issued. If the family selects a provider who is not registered, the family is instructed to advise the provider to contact DES/CCA to initiate the registration process. Providers must be registered prior to payment for child care services.

Providers submit billing forms at the end of each month for services rendered during that month. DES makes payment, on average, 16 calendar days after receiving the correctly completed form. In almost all instances, payment is made within 30 days.

3.1.2 In addition to offering certificates, does the Lead Agency also have grants or contracts for child care slots?

☒ Yes, and the following describes the types of child care services, the process for accessing grants or contracts, and the range of providers that will be available through grants or contracts: (658A(b)(1), 658P(4), §§98.16(g)(1), 98.30(a)(1) & (b))

☐ No

Contracts for child care slots are limited to specialized services for the provision of child care to children with special needs. These contracts are issued through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which is open to all types of child care providers. Services available pursuant to this RFP are available at certain child care centers.

3.1.3 The Lead Agency must allow for in-home care but may limit its use. Does the Lead Agency limit the use of in-home care in any way?

☐ Yes, and the limits and the reasons for those limits are: (§§98.16(g)(2), 98.30(e)(1)(iv))

☒ No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered: (**offered statewide**)

3.1.4 Are all of the child care services described in 3.1.1 above (including certificates) offered throughout the State? (658E(a), §98.16(g)(3))

☒ Yes

☐ No, and the following are the localities (political subdivisions) and the services that are not offered:

3.2 Payment Rates for the Provision of Child Care

The statute at 658E(c)(4) and the regulations at §98.43(b)(1) require the Lead Agency to establish payment rates for child care services that ensure eligible children equal access to comparable care.

These rates are provided as **Attachment D**.

The attached payment rates were or will be effective as of January 2003.

The following is a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that the attached rates are sufficient to ensure equal access to comparable child care services provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive child care assistance under the CCDF and other governmental programs. Include, at a minimum:

- The month and year when the local market rate survey(s) was completed: December 2004. (§98.43(b)(2))
- A copy of the Market Rate Survey instrument and a summary of the results of the survey are provided as **Attachment E and E1**.
- How the payment rates are adequate to ensure equal access based on the results of the above noted local market rate survey (i.e., the relationship between the attached payment rates and the market rates observed in the survey): (§98.43(b))
- Additional facts that the Lead Agency relies on to determine that its payment rates ensure equal access include: (§98.43(d))
- If the payment rates do not reflect individual rates for the full range of providers - center-based, group home, family and in-home care -- explain how the choice of the full range of providers is made available to parents.

For Licensed Child Care Centers, Certified Group Homes and Certified Small Family Homes

Arizona has established individual maximum payment rates for a full range of providers, i.e. center, group home and home based care (see Attachment D). These rates further differentiate between different ages of children in care and full and part day care resulting in the 144 unique maximum payment rates, which are identified in Attachment D. Additionally, an enhanced rate is potentially available (10 percent over the maximum payment rate) for providers that meet nationally recognized accreditation standards.

The rates allow for the reimbursement of child care services at the actual cost of care (normal and customary charges), but not more than the maximum payment for categories of care in local areas. The six local areas are based upon their geographic proximity or common characteristics and are generally defined by the following counties:

District I - Maricopa

District II - Pima

District III- Apache, Coconino, Navajo and Yavapai

District IV- La Paz, Mohave, and Yuma

District V - Gila and Pinal

District VI- Cochise, Graham, Greenlee and Santa Cruz

- At what percentile of the current Market Rate Survey is the State rate ceiling set? If it varies across categories of care, please describe.

In 2001, the State Legislature, appropriated funding which allowed the maximum payment rates for child care services to be set at the 75th percentile of the 1998 Child Care Market Rate Survey, effective 10/1/ 01. Due to insufficient federal funding, limited state appropriations and increasing child care caseloads, further rate adjustments have not been possible without reducing the number of families in the state receiving assistance.

An updated Child Care Market Rate Survey was completed in December 2004. A copy of the 2004 Market Rate Survey instrument is provided as Attachment E.

A comparison of the aggregate (non-weighted) current 144 maximum payment rates to the aggregate (non-weighted) 75th percentiles of the 2004 Survey, shows that the current maximum payment rates are approximately 78% of the 2004 Survey 75th percentile. Summary results from the 2004 Survey are included in Attachment E-1 and can be used to compare the current market rates to each of the state's 144 maximum payment rates.

Families have access to and a choice of a full range of child care providers as evidenced by the fact that of the potential pool of providers which DES can contract with for subsidized care, approximately 86% licensed centers and certified group homes in Arizona and all Certified Small Family Child Care homes have Registration Agreements with DES for reimbursement for care and therefore are available to provide care to children of eligible families. As a result, families can and do have access to the vast majority of child care providers in the state. A further indication (that rates provide equal access) can be seen by the patterns of utilization of care across different types of providers. Currently, of all the children receiving CCDF child care through DES, 70% receive care in child care centers; 7% receive care in certified group; 10% receive care in small family child care homes; and 13% receive care that is provided by unregulated relative providers.

For Unregulated Relative Providers

For unregulated relative providers (i.e. Non-Certified Relative Providers [NCRPs]) who provide care, a fixed rate* of \$10.50 for full day and \$6.00 for part day has been established. The fixed rate is currently set at a level that is 70% of the average actual daily payment that was made to certified family child care homes in the Spring of 2001. Experience with unregulated relatives who provide care indicates that they typically are not in the business of providing child care and do not have normal and customary charges for child care. Additionally, NCRPs are not required to meet any significant health and safety requirements that are required of certified family child care homes. NCRPs are only required to meet very minimal requirements to receive payment.

*A pilot project was conducted in 1997 to determine the feasibility of setting fixed rates for NCRPs. This pilot was conducted throughout the state and no significant decrease in the number of providers willing to provide care at a fixed rate was experienced. The use of NCRPs continues to be utilized at a constant, if not increasing rate.

- Does the State have a tiered reimbursement system (higher rates for child care centers and family child care homes that achieve one or more levels of quality beyond basic licensing requirements)?

(X) Yes. If yes, describe:
☐ No

Effective August 1999, the DES Enhanced Rate for Accredited Programs became operational. The intent of the Enhanced Rate is two-fold: 1) to make higher quality (accredited) child care slots available to DES subsidized children whose parents may not be able to afford this care, and 2) to encourage more providers to become accredited. This allows children whose parents are eligible for child care subsidies to enroll in programs providing higher quality of care by reimbursing nationally accredited providers 10% higher than the DES maximum rates.

All types of child care programs are included in the tiered reimbursement system (Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Homes, Head Start and School-Age Child Care Programs). DES adopted the State Board of Education approved list of center based accreditation bodies currently used for the Arizona Department of Education At-Risk Preschool programs. These include the following:

**ACSI = Association for Christian Schools International
AMI = American Montessori International
AMS = American Montessori Society
NAA= National After School Association [formerly NSACA]
NAC = National Accreditation Commission for Early care & Education Programs
NAEYC = National Association for the Education of Young Children, Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation
NECPA = National Early Childhood Program Accreditation**

DES, in consultation with the CCAC, adopted additional standards that are more specific to home based programs. These include the following:

**NAFCC = National Association for Family Child Care
CDA = National Child Development Associate Credential with a specialization in home providers**

3.3 Eligibility Criteria for Child Care

- 3.3.1 Complete column (a) and (b) in the matrix below. Complete Column (c) ONLY IF the Lead Agency is using income eligibility limits lower than 85% of the SMI.

Family Size	(a) 100% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month)	(b) 85% of State Median Income (SMI) (\$/month) [Multiply (a) by 0.85]	IF APPLICABLE	
			(c) Income Level, lower than 85% SMI, if used to limit eligibility	
			(d) \$/month	(e) % of SMI [Divide (d) by (a), multiply by 100]
1	2,523	2,145	1,317	52%
2	3,299	2,805	1,766	54%
3	4,075	3,464	2,213	54%
4	4,851	4,124	2,662	55%
5	5,628	4,784	3,111	55%

If the Lead Agency does not use the SMI from the most current year, indicate the year used:

Arizona uses Federal Poverty Guidelines as a basis for determining eligibility, not SMI. However, for the purposes of the matrix above, the SMI for Federal Fiscal Year 2005, as published in the Federal Register/ Volume 70, No. 33/ 2/18/05, was used.

If applicable, the date on which the eligibility limits detailed in column (b) became or will become effective: **7/1/05**

- 3.3.2 How does the Lead Agency define “income” for the purposes of eligibility? Is any income deducted or excluded from total family income, for instance, work or medical expenses; child support paid to, or received from, other households; Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments? Is the income of all family members included, or is the income of certain family members living in the household excluded? Please describe and/or include information as **Attachment E**. (§§98.16(g)(5), 98.20(b))

- 3.3.3 Has the Lead Agency established additional eligibility conditions or priority rules, for example, income limits that vary in different parts of the State, special eligibility for families receiving TANF, or eligibility that differs for families that include a child with special needs? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.16(g)(5), §98.20(b))

☐ Yes, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)
(X) No

- 3.3.4 Has the Lead Agency elected to waive, on a case-by-case basis, the fee and income eligibility requirements for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2? (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3)(C)(ii), §98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A))
- (X) Yes*, and the additional eligibility criteria are: (Terms must be defined in Appendix 2)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable. CCDF-funded child care is not provided in cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services.

*** The fee and income eligibility requirements are waived for cases in which children receive, or need to receive, protective services, as defined in Appendix 2 (5) a) only.**

- 3.3.5 Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are physically and/or mentally incapable of self-care? (Physical and mental incapacity must then be defined in Appendix 2.) (658E(c)(3)(B), 658P(3), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☐ Yes, and the upper age is ____.

(X) No

- 3.3.6 Does the Lead Agency allow CCDF-funded child care for children above age 13 but below age 19 who are under court supervision? (658P(3), 658E(c)(3)(B), §98.20(a)(1)(ii))

☐ Yes, and the upper age is ____.

(X) No

- 3.3.7 Does the State choose to provide CCDF-funded child care to children in foster care whose foster care parents are not working, or who are not in education/training activities? (§§98.20(a)(3)(ii), 98.16(f)(7))

(X) Yes. (**NOTE:** This means that for CCDF purposes the State considers these children to be in protective services.)

☐ No

- 3.3.8 Does the State choose to provide child care to children in protective services? (§§98.16(f)(7), 98.20(a)(3)(ii)(A) & (B))

(X) Yes

No

3.4 Priorities for Serving Children and Families

- 3.4.1 Describe how the State prioritizes service for the following CCDF-eligible children: (a) children with special needs, (b) children in families with very low incomes, and (c) other. Terms must be defined in Appendix 2. (658E(c)(3)(B))

Families will receive priority for services in the following order:

- 1. TANF and TCC eligible families;**
- 2. Families receiving child care for protective services, as defined in Appendix 2(5) a);**
- 3. Other eligible families with very low income; and**
- 4. All other eligible families with income that does not exceed the income level used to limit eligibility (as defined in the table at Section 3.3.1).**

If the number of families applying and eligible for services exceeds available funding, a statewide waiting list for services will be imposed. (See Section 3.4.3).

Priority for children with special needs is given through the establishment of contracts that provide an enhanced rate to programs that serve children with special child care needs. These programs may provide materials, equipment, curriculum, schedules, environments, family involvement and program evaluation that ensure that each child's capabilities and needs are met.

- 3.4.2 Describe how CCDF funds will be used to meet the needs of: (a) families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), (b) those attempting to transition off TANF through work activities, and (c) those at risk of becoming dependent on TANF. (658E(c)(2)(H), Section 418(b)(2) of the Social Security Act, §§98.50(e), 98.16(g)(4))

DES will meet the child needs of these families by: 1) providing child care services upon referral from the Jobs program for TANF recipients; 2) providing child care services for employed TANF recipients; 3) providing TCC for families transitioning off of TANF; and 4) providing child care assistance to working families (not on TANF) with very low income.

- 3.4.3 Does the Lead Agency maintain a waiting list?
- ☐ Yes. If yes, for what populations? Is the waiting list maintained at the State level? Are certain populations given priority for services, and if so, which populations? What methods are employed to keep the list current?
- (X)* No. If no, does the Lead Agency serve all eligible families that apply?
- (X) Yes
- ☐ No

Are there other ways that the Lead Agency addresses situations in which funding is not sufficient to serve all families that are technically eligible under State policies? If so, describe.

***As of June 2005, no waiting list is currently in place. When funding is not available to serve all families that are technically eligible under State policies, a statewide priority waiting list for services will be utilized. (Families already receiving child care services may continue to do so as long as they continue to meet eligibility criteria).**

If a family applies and is eligible for child care services they may be placed on the priority waiting list. When openings occur, DES will contact them. When they respond to our contact, they may be authorized for services if they continue to meet eligibility criteria.

(Currently, certain families are not subject to the priority waiting list. They include: TANF cash assistance recipients who need child care for employment or participation in the Jobs program; former TANF cash assistance recipients who are eligible for Transitional Child Care; and families who are referred for child care services by DES Child Protective Services).

When openings become available for child care services, families on the priority waiting list will be released based on their current priority level (based on current gross monthly income) and the date of application. Priority of children on the waiting list shall start with those families at 100% of the FPL (Federal Poverty Level) and continue with each successive 10% increase in the FPL until the maximum allowable FPL of 165%. Priority shall be given regardless of time spent on the waiting list.

Families must report changes to the DES Child Care Administration while they are on the priority waiting list. These changes include: address or phone number; employment status; income; cash assistance benefit status; education/training status; and household composition.

Families on the priority waiting list must submit a redetermination application and required verification every twelve months or as requested by DES. They may remain on the priority waiting list as long as they continue to meet income and general eligibility guidelines and continue to cooperate with the Department to determine eligibility. If they fail to submit a redetermination application by their review date and are removed from the priority waiting list, they would need to reapply for child care services.

Families will be notified by mail when an opening is available for child care services. They will be required to notify the DES Child care Administration within 10 calendar days from the date the notice was sent regarding their selection of a child care provider and to provide verification of any changes that may have occurred since they applied. If they fail to respond by the 10th calendar day, their name will be removed from the priority waiting list and they would be required to reapply for services.

3.5 Sliding Fee Scale for Child Care Services

- 3.5.1 A sliding fee scale, which is used to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care, must vary based on income and the size of the family. A copy of this sliding fee scale for child care services and an explanation of how it works are provided as **Attachment F**.

The attached fee scale was or will be effective as of **7/1/05**.

Will the Lead Agency use additional factors to determine each family's contribution to the cost of child care? (658E(c)(3)(B), §98.42(b))

(X) Yes, and the following describes any additional factors that will be used:
The number of children in care will also be used as a factor in determining a family's contribution.

☐ No

- 3.5.2 Is the sliding fee scale provided in the attachment in response to question 3.5.1 used in all parts of the State? (658E(c)(3)(B))

(X) Yes

☐ No, and other scale(s) and their effective date(s) are provided as Attachment ____.

- 3.5.3 The Lead Agency may waive contributions from families whose incomes are at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size, (§98.42(c)), and the poverty level used by the Lead Agency for a family of 3 is: **\$1,341/month (effective 7/01/05)**.

The Lead Agency must elect ONE of these options:

☐ ALL families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee.

☐ ALL families, including those with incomes at or below the poverty level for families of the same size, ARE required to pay a fee.

(X) SOME families with income at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size ARE NOT required to pay a fee. The following describes these families:

Families who have an open TANF case and whose income is at or below the poverty level for a family of the same size will not have a required co-payment.

- 3.5.4 Does the Lead Agency have a policy that prohibits a child care provider from charging families any unsubsidized portion of the provider's normal fees (in addition to the contributions discussed in 3.5.1)? (§98.43(b)(3))

☐ Yes. Please describe:

(X) No.

3.5.5 The following is an explanation of how the copayments required by the Lead Agency's sliding fee scale(s) are affordable: (§98.43(b)(3))

The percentage of family income that would be used to meet its co-payment may vary depending on numerous factors such as: family size and income, number and age of children in care, actual amount of care used, actual cost and reimbursement level of care, extra charges, etc. Examples of this percentage and the assumptions used follows.

PARENTAL COPAYMENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF GROSS MONTHLY INCOME

Hourly Wage	Gross Monthly Income (GMI)	Fee Level	Monthly Child Care Cost	DES Payment	Parental Payment	Parental Payment as % of GMI
\$5.15	\$885	1	\$1,135.20	\$987.80	\$147.40	17%
6.63	1,140	1	1,135.20	987.80	147.40	13%
6.64	1,142	2	1,135.20	954.80	180.40	16%
7.80	1,341	2	1,135.20	954.80	180.40	13%
7.81	1,342	3	1,135.20	921.80	213.40	16%
10.53	1,811	3	1,135.20	921.80	213.40	12%
10.54	1,812	4	1,135.20	855.80	279.40	15%
11.31	1,945	4	1,135.20	855.80	279.40	14%
11.32	1,946	5	1,135.20	789.80	345.40	18%
12.09	2,079	5	1,135.20	789.80	345.40	17%
12.10	2,080	6	1,135.20	690.80	444.40	21%
12.87	2,213	6	1,135.20	690.80	444.40	20%

Assumptions

Family Size 3; Single parent working 40 hours per week. No other household income.

Two children, ages 3 & 4 in median cost center based care in Maricopa County.

Median cost of center based care for children age 3 - 5 = \$25.80 per day (per 2004 Child Care Market Rate Survey), no extra charges.

Monthly child care cost: \$25.80 per day x 22 days per month x 2 children = \$1,135.20.

DES payment calculations (based upon maximum state reimbursement rate of \$23.20/day minus applicable co-payment for each child)

Fee Level 1 - (\$23.20 - 1.00 + 23.20 - .50) x 22 = \$987.80

Fee Level 2 - (\$23.20 - 2.00 + 23.20 - 1.00) x 22 = \$954.80

Fee Level 3 - (\$23.20 - 3.00 + 23.20 - 1.50) x 22 = \$921.80

Fee Level 4 - (\$23.20 - 5.00 + 23.20 - 2.50) x 22 = \$855.80

Fee Level 5 - (\$23.20 - 7.00 + 23.20 - 3.50) x 22 = \$789.80

Fee Level 6 - (\$23.20 - 10.00 + 23.20 - 5.00) x 22 = \$690.80

PART 4

PROCESSES WITH PARENTS

4.1 Application Process / Parental Choice

4.1.1 The following describes the process for a family to apply for and receive child care services (658D(b)(1)(A), 658E(c)(2)(D) & (3)(B), §§98.16(k), 98.30(a) through (e)). If the process varies for families based on eligibility category, for instance, TANF versus non-TANF, please describe. The description should include:

- How parents are informed of the availability of child care services and about child care options
- Where/how applications are made
- Who makes the eligibility determination
- How parents who receive TANF benefits are informed about the exception to individual penalties as described in 4.4
- Length of eligibility period including variations that relate to the services provided, e.g., through collaborations with Head Start or pre-kindergarten programs
- Any steps the State has taken to reduce barriers to initial and continuing eligibility for child care subsidies

Families with a need for child care services become aware of the State child care program through a number of sources. This would include DES offices (e.g. TANF, Jobs, etc.), or DES contractors offices, various other public and private human service agencies, child care providers, child care resource and referral agencies, family and friends, community information and referral agencies and through general public consumer education information.

To apply for services a family may contact any of the DES Child Care offices, located throughout the state or a DES contractor's office. A family may obtain an application and arrange for an intake interview in person, by telephone or through the mail. The interview may be conducted the same day as the initial contact or may be scheduled to take place at a later date. An application can also be accessed through the DES Website.

During an intake interview a Child Care Specialist assesses the family's need for child care and determines eligibility based on income, family size and programmatic need for child care (e.g., work or education/training). The family's rights and responsibilities are reviewed and the family is informed of available child care options and their right to choose the category and type of care that best meets their needs. Eligibility is determined within 30 days from the receipt of an application. Child care cases are reviewed at least once per year to evaluate eligibility for services.

Each child is limited to no more than 60 cumulative months of child care assistance (does not impact TANF, TCC or CPS eligible families). DES may provide an extension of childcare services to families providing proof of efforts to improve skills and moving towards self-sufficiency

A parent who is receiving TANF benefits is informed by the TANF Employment Case manager, during the assessment process, about the exception to individual penalties as described in Section 4.4. The criteria and process for determining whether a TANF participant qualifies for a child care

exception is explained verbally to the client. A written document is also provided to the client that explains what to do if a provider cannot be located.

A family may also be determined eligible on an individual case by case basis and referred to a DES Child Care Specialist by a DES TANF, Jobs or Child Protective Services Specialist. Families that reside in an area in which there are specialized contracted child care services are informed of the availability of these programs, as appropriate, and their option to use these services. If a family selects a provider that does not have a Registration Agreement with DES, the provider contacts DES to initiate the registration process. A Certificate of Authorization will be provided to the family and the registered provider and services may begin.

If the family is eligible, the Specialist determines any required co-payment amounts and the amount of child care to be authorized (i.e., number of full and/or part days). The Specialist may also provide information on currently registered child care providers as requested. Families needing additional assistance in locating a child care provider may be referred to a child care resource and referral agency.

In order to facilitate access to child care services and reduce barriers, families are not required to appear at a child care office for redeterminations of eligibility. Redeterminations of eligibility and other changes (e.g. provider changes) are handled through the mail and families can submit any necessary paperwork without having to disrupt their activity (e.g. employment or training) schedule. Additionally, many initial applications for child care services do not require an office visit. This would typically be the case when a family was referred for services by a Jobs or Child Protective Services Specialist. In these situations it may only be necessary for the eligible family to make a telephone contact with a child care specialist in order to provide information on the provider the family has selected.

- 4.1.2 The following is a detailed description of how the State ensures that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care including faith-based providers in each of these categories.

The State of Arizona ensures that parents are informed about their ability to choose from among family and group home care, center-based care and in-home care (including faith-based providers) through a variety of strategies, as outlined below. Faith-based providers are not a specific provider type (*but* may exist within various provider types), and are therefore not referred to as a distinct and separate category of care.

- Utilization of Brochures For Consumer Education Regarding Provider Options:

The DES Child Care Programs brochure is continuously made available at every local office and various community agencies for anyone expressing an interest in receiving Child Care Assistance. The DES Child Care Programs brochure lists the types of child care providers who contract with the Department of Economic Security (DES) Child Care Administration (CCA) and also provides information about assistance with locating a child care provider through Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R). The toll free phone number and website for CCR&R are listed in the brochure for easy reference by customers.

CCR&R also distributes their own brochures to local offices and community agencies. The CCR&R brochure contains information on choosing quality child care, the types of child care available, and information on how to contact CCR&R for assistance with provider location.

- **Interview Policy Requires Dialogue Regarding Provider Options:**

Reinforced in training and by management oversight, DES Child Care Administration policy requires that field case managers provide information to the client at initial interview to enable them to make an informed choice of child care arrangements. The following child care options must be discussed with the client and the discussion documented in the case file:

- Licensed Centers
- Certified Family Child Care Group Homes
- Certified In Home Care Providers
- Certified Group Homes
- Relative Providers
- Non-reimbursable care (i.e. Head Start, public preschool)

- **Automated Notice Inserts Describing Provider Options:**

Automated decision notices mailed to ongoing clients also include a "DES Child Care Services Information" insert, which contains information on assistance in locating a child care provider, and directing the client to contact CCR&R for additional assistance.

- **The DES Child Care Administration Website:**

The DES Child Care Administration website <http://www.azdes.gov/childcare/> informs individuals visiting the site that CCA certifies and contracts with small family child care homes, contracts with Department of Health Services (DHS) licensed child care centers and group homes and non-certified relative providers to provide child care services for eligible families. The site contains "information for parents" which lists the types of providers who contract with DES and states that if a parent cannot find a child care provider they can contact their local DES Child Care office or CCR&R for assistance in finding a provider that suits their needs and information on what to look for when choosing a provider. Two links are available on the DES CCA website providing access to CCR&R's home page (<http://www.arizonachildcare.org/>) and the CCR&R on-line referral system (<http://www.arizonachildcare.org/parent/referral.html>).

4.2 Records of Parental Complaints

The following is a detailed description of how the State maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and how it makes the information regarding such parental complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C), §98.32))

By law, the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) is responsible for the licensure of child care centers and certification of child care group homes. This includes maintaining a record of substantiated complaints, which are available for public review upon request. Members of the public may review child care center and group home licensure/certification files in DHS Office of Child Care Licensure offices at various locations around the state. The public may also contact a DHS Office of Child Care Licensure and request that complaint information be provided verbally, by mail or by FAX.

Complaint records for small certified family child care, in-home and relative providers are maintained and available for review in various DES Child Care Administration offices throughout the state. The public may also contact a DES Child Care Administration office and request that complaint information be provided verbally, by mail or by FAX.

4.3 Unlimited Access to Children in Child Care Settings

The following is a detailed description of the procedures in effect in the State for affording parents unlimited access to their children whenever their children are in the care of a provider who receives CCDF funds. (658E(c)(2)(B), §98.31))

All child care providers must have a Registration Agreement with DES in order to facilitate payment to that provider. By signing the Registration Agreement, the provider agrees to allow access by parents, guardians, or their authorized representatives to all areas of the facility where child care is provided at any time during the provider's hours of operation and whenever the children are in the care of the provider. Additionally, in the state statute and rule governing the health and safety of child care centers and group homes, the Department of Health Services (DHS), requires facilities to allow parents, guardians or authorized representatives to have unlimited access.

4.4 Criteria or Definitions Applied by TANF Agency to Determine Inability to Obtain Child Care

The regulations at §98.33(b) require the Lead Agency to inform parents who receive TANF benefits about the exception to the individual penalties associated with the work requirement for any single custodial parent who has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care for a child under 6 years of age.

In fulfilling this requirement, the following criteria or definitions are applied by the TANF agency to determine whether the parent has a demonstrated inability to obtain needed child care:

NOTE: The TANF agency, not the Child Care Lead Agency, is responsible for establishing the following criteria or definitions. These criteria or definitions are offered in this Plan as a matter of public record. The TANF agency that established these criteria or definitions is: **Arizona Department of Economic Security, Employment Administration, Jobs Program**

- "appropriate child care": means - child care that is licensed or certified by the Arizona Department of Health Services or certified by the Arizona Department of Economic Security.
- "reasonable distance": means - child care that is available when the total travel time from a TANF participant's home, to the child care provider, and to a work activity, is 1½ hours (or less) one way; or ½ hour (or less) one way if the only mode of transportation is walking.
- "unsuitability of informal child care": means - child care that is available through a relative provider, but the recipient declares in writing that the provider is inappropriate based on factors such as, that the relative provider: a) Has a history of child neglect or abuse; b) Is experiencing domestic violence; c) Has a history of serious crime; d) Is a drug abuser; e) Has an emotional, mental or physical condition which prevents the relative from providing safe care; or f) Resides in a home which is unsafe for children.
- "affordable child care arrangements": means child care that is available when the cost of care is equal to or less than the amount that DES will pay.

PART 5
ACTIVITIES & SERVICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND AVAILABILITY OF
CHILD CARE

5.1 Quality Earmarks and Set-Asides

- 5.1.1 The Child Care and Development Fund provides earmarks for infant and toddler care and school-age care and resource and referral services as well as the special earmark for quality activities. The following describes the activities; identifies the entities providing the activities; and describes the expected results of the activities. For the infant and toddler earmark, the State must note in its description of the activities what is the maximum age of a child who may be served with such earmarked funds.

Infants and toddlers:

In Arizona, for all activities listed below, the maximum age of a child who may be served with such earmarked funds is up to 3 years of age.

Through a technical assistant grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Bureau (referenced in Section 2.1.2), Arizona's Infant Toddler Child Care Team is working on defining competencies and competency based training for infant toddler child care personnel. This work will influence activities designed to improve infant and toddler care. Additional information about the work of the Arizona Team can be found at this link:
<http://nccic.org/itcc/states/Arizona.htm>

DES makes funds available through contracts, for activities to improve the quality of infant and toddler care in Arizona. Specific activities currently include:

- Child Care training is provided that is specific to infants and toddlers and delivered to center and/or home based providers. This includes a training delivery system that utilizes the West Ed Infant/Toddler curriculum. The system provides resources to providers for expenses associated with participating in training e.g. the cost of substitute caregivers; and incentives to participants who complete training. Incentives could be in the form of further training opportunities, equipment, materials, supplies, etc.
- Four home recruitment contracts for Family Child Care providers targets the need for infant care for non-traditional hours and weekend care.
- Payment of an enhanced rate to licensed centers or family child care programs that are nationally accredited. In Arizona, approximately one third of the enhanced rate paid is for infants and toddlers in accredited programs.

The expected results of these activities include:

- Through training, staff become more qualified to work with infants and toddlers and have a better understanding of a child's needs at this age.
- The home recruitment of Family Child Care providers is intended to build capacity and to improve the quality of care for infants.

- **Enhanced rates for accredited programs assist with the costs associated in meeting higher standards such as implementing developmentally appropriate practices, providing lower staff/child ratios and retaining higher educated and experienced staff.**

Resource and referral services:

DES contracts with community based organizations for the purpose of providing Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) services. These organizations:

- **Collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children, other low income families and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices;**
- **Provide parents with child care options that best meet their needs;**
- **Provide consumer education and information on child care options, indicators of quality programs, licensing and regulatory requirements, complaint procedures, eligibility for child care subsidies and parental access;**
- **Collect and report data about child care supply and demand;**
- **Recruit existing child care providers to be included in the database;**
- **Provide training opportunities for providers.**
- **Encourage the development of new programs in areas of identified need; and**
- **Assist with processing unregulated home providers to meet the requirements of listing with CCR&R. Unregulated home providers who elect to be listed with CCR&R are required to: submit fingerprints for a criminal history check; clear a state child protective services background check; provide proof of current infant/child CPR certification; and attest that any guns and ammunition are locked in separate containers and pools are fenced.**
- **Assist with recruiting and processing otherwise unregulated home providers to meet the requirements of listing with CCR&R. Unregulated home providers who elect to be listed with CCR&R are required to: submit fingerprints for a criminal history check; clear a state child protective services background check; provide proof of current infant/child CPR certification; and attest that any guns and ammunition are locked in separate containers and pools are fenced.**
- **All agencies that hold a contract to offer CCR&R services in Arizona will attain or maintain Quality Assurance Validation through the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referrals.**

The expected results of these activities are:

- **Child Care Resource and Referral is seen as a resource for families to obtain information about quality child care and the choices available;**
- **Through meeting the Quality Assurance Validation requirements, the services offered will be in keeping with best practices of CCR&R operation.**
- **An increased number of providers will be added to the database, to ensure that sufficient choices are available to consumers statewide; and**

- **To add further confidence to the general public, all providers listed with Child Care Resource and Referral will meet minimum guidelines for background checks and safety requirements.**

DES currently contracts with the two CCR&R entities identified in Section 1.6 to provide these activities.

School-age child care:

Divisions within the Governor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families (GOCYF) will collaborate with community groups who serve as the voice and advocates for children considered the "tweeners" who fall between the age of school readiness and high school. The GOCYF, Arizona School Readiness Board will be participating in national conferences and dialogues related to youth service providers for the purpose of sharing in the dialogue of best practices and effective program development.

A "Phone Friend" program will also be available. This program is an after school, bilingual, "warm line" phone service for children who are home alone. Trained counselors (staff and supervised volunteers) assist children with homework, sibling conflicts, problem solving and non-emergency situations. The program also provides home and internet safety trainings to children through outreach to community based settings, often in the local schools.

- 5.1.2 The law requires that not less than 4% of the CCDF be set aside for quality activities. (658E(c)(3)(B), 658G, §§98.13(a), 98.16(h), 98.51) The Lead Agency estimates that the following amount and percentage will be used for the quality activities (not including earmarked funds):

\$ 4,574,633 (4%)

5.1.3 Check either "Yes" or "No" for each activity listed to indicate the activities the Lead Agency will undertake to improve the availability and quality of child care (include activities funded through the 4% quality set-aside as well as the special earmark for quality activities). (658D(b)(1)(D), 658E(c)(3)(B), §§98.13(a), 98.16(h))

	Yes	No
• Comprehensive consumer education	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Professional development, including training, education, and technical assistance	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Activities to promote inclusive child care	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))	(X)	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.1.4 Describe each activity that is checked "Yes" above, identify the entity(ies) providing the activity, and describe the expected results of the activity.

Comprehensive consumer education:

DES contracts with community based organizations for the purpose of providing comprehensive consumer education. These services include:

- **Arizona statute requires DES to maintain a Statewide Child Care Resource and Referral System that will provide families with information on all types of child care, information about child care resources and services and information about choosing child care**

- A major component of this activity is the Arizona Child Care Resource and Referral Consumer Education Campaign. The objective of this effort is to establish and increase the overall name recognition of Child Care Resource and Referral programs and services
- A concentrated effort is being made to expand consumer education for parents seeking out quality child care. New approaches towards this end include paid and free television, radio, newspaper and periodical ads; and billboard, bus bench and bus ads. This effort is now also utilized to increase the number of child care providers that are listed in the database.
- Referral services are available to parents 24 hours a day through the statewide CCR&R website (azchildcare.org). Parents are able to tailor their search geographically by city or county, by provider type, by ages of children and can also search exclusively for providers that hold a DES contract.
- Additionally, both CCR&R agencies are participating in a media campaign designed by the national United Way organization. The name of the campaign is Born Learning and is targeted to parents of very young children interested in resources to improve their parenting skills or information about the development of their children. In promotion of this campaign, the toll free CCR&R phone number will be used in print and television ads. In response to questions generated by the ads, CCR&R staff will either answer questions or will inform the callers of available resources in their area.

The expected results of these activities are:

- More parents will become aware of the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies in the state and the services that they offer.
- Child care providers will remain informed of services available to providers, as well as to the families they serve.

Grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards

(See Section 2.1.2 - Consultation and Coordination for information on activities related to #9 - creating public-private partnerships to build the capacity of local communities to provide quality early childhood education).

Monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements:

DES partners with the Department of Health Services (DHS) for the purpose of improving the monitoring of compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements. CCDF funding is utilized by DHS to provide for activities associated with certification/monitoring of child care group homes and the licensing/monitoring of child care centers. CCDF funding is also utilized by DES to monitor & certify small family provider homes that receive public subsidies. The expected results of these activities are that there will be increased and better monitoring of health and safety licensing requirements and an increase in the ability to more quickly respond to complaints from the public.

Professional development, including training, education and technical assistance:

(See Section 5.2.5 - State Plans for Professional Development, for detailed information on this activity).

Community based training opportunities and technical assistance are offered to all types of child care providers. In order to best meet the needs of Arizona's Child Care Practitioners, a range of services is offered statewide and include:

- Stand-alone trainings;
- Individualized training series offered on-site (i.e. at child care facilities) and off-site with follow up plans;
- Nationally recognized researched based off-site trainings, designed specifically to meet the needs of infants and toddlers practitioner with follow-up plans and on-site coaching;
- Scholarships to practitioners for credit bearing course work in early childhood education leading toward the completion of an accredited degree program available through community colleges;
- Introductory 60-hour child care training course offered to individuals interested in entering the field, or to practitioners with little knowledge and background in the field; and
- Technical assistance and training offered to programs serving children with disabilities and special health care needs.

Improving salaries and other compensation for child care providers

(See Section 2.1.2 - Consultation and Coordination for information on activities related to #5 - increasing the pool and retention of qualified early childhood professionals)

Activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading and numeracy development:

(See Section 2.1.2 - Consultation and Coordination for information on activities related to #1- provide parent education and family support programs that strengthen families and promote school readiness)

DES contracts out for various training activities during the course of the Plan period. Contracts are awarded pursuant to a Request for Proposals evaluation process, which includes a review to determine the focus on language, literacy and numeracy development. As a result, trainings have an increased emphasis in the areas of language, literacy, and numeracy. It is also expected that this will lead to increased knowledge of pre-literacy activities and the importance of reading, as well as improve teaching skills and assist in development of appropriate school readiness activities for the classroom.

Additionally the Arizona State Board on School Readiness and will be supported with CCDF resources (see Section 5.2.3- State Plan for Program Coordination). One function of the Board is to identify and measure indicators of school readiness. Arizona is currently one of 17 states participating in a national initiative to develop indicators for school readiness, addressing areas of language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, physical well-being, and motor development. Members of the Board are participants in the indicator initiative and will provide a direct link to the initiative. These indicators will be one mechanism in which benchmarks for the assessment of outcomes of children and communities may be developed.

Activities to promote inclusive child care:

DES contracts for training for providers caring for special needs children, ages 0-12. Specialized training and technical assistance is be offered that focuses on the inclusion of children with disabilities in home based, center based and after school based settings. Child care providers are offered information, education and support concerning children with special needs. Resource and video materials are available through a lending library in some counties. These trainings will provide an increase in child care providers' competence in addressing the needs of children with special child care needs, as evidenced by knowledge of disabilities, coordinating with community resources, and the practice of inclusive child care.

Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children:

(See Section 2.1 - Consultation and Coordination for information on activities related to Healthy Child Care America) Additionally, Child Care Health Consultants have received training that includes a section on developing Plans of Care for children with special needs so that child care providers, health care providers, and families work together to ensure the child can participate in early childhood education. During the plan period, CCHC training will include an enhanced module on infant mental health in addition to normal social emotional development.

Other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care:

DES contracts with community based organizations and institutions of higher learning for the purpose of providing other quality activity that increase parental choice and improve the quality and availability of child care. These services include:

- Providing resources to assist in meeting the increasing demand for child care in rural and low-income urban areas by recruiting and providing orientation and training for family child care providers;
- Providing resources to assist with costs associated with meeting requirements to be a child care home provider;
- Providing support to providers that are pursuing national accreditation through enhanced training/technical assistance, and mini-grants;

- Providing support to providers that are pursuing higher education through the payment of tuition, books and fee's for Child Development Associate (CDA) classes at Community Colleges;
- Providing resources to families that are homeless or victims of domestic violence by supporting on-site licensed child care centers at shelters;
- Providing resources to families by paying an enhanced rate for providers that are nationally accredited; and
- Depending on the availability of funding, DES may engage in additional activities to increase parental choice and improve the quality and availability of child care.

The expected results of these activities are:

- Parents will have increased options when selecting child care;
- Barriers will be removed for providers seeking to improve the level of quality they offer and also for those interested in becoming child care providers;
- More child care providers will pursue higher education or national accreditation which has been shown to increase the quality of care; and
- Families will have greater accessibility to nationally accredited providers.

5.1.5 Is any entity identified in sections 5.1.1 or 5.1.4 a non-governmental entity?

☒ (X) Yes, the following entities named in this part are non-governmental: *
Name:
Type: (see section 1.6 of the guidance):

☐ No.

*** Entities that provide any of the activities described in Sections 5.1.1 or – 5.1.4 may be governmental, private non-profit or private for profit. In order to ensure that the most appropriate, effective and efficient services are provided, DES may solicit Request for Proposals (RFP) and award contracts on a competitive basis and/or enter into Inter-Governmental-Agreements or Interagency Service Agreements to have activities provided. Additionally, these activities are provided based upon identified needs and available funding and may change on regular basis.**

Types of agencies that typically provide these activities may include: non-governmental community agencies (including community based organizations); child care resource and referral agencies; for profit, not for profit and school based child care providers; and community colleges. Information on entities that have previously provided these activities including and those who currently may currently be providing these services is available from the DES Child Care Administration.

5.2 Good Start, Grow Smart Planning and Development-

This section of the Plan relates to the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative which is envisioned as a Federal-State partnership that creates linkages between CCDF, including funds set-aside for quality, and State public and private efforts to promote early learning. In this section, each Lead Agency is asked to assess its State's progress toward developing voluntary guidelines on language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts and a plan for the education and training of child care providers. The third component of the President's *Good Start, Grow Smart* initiative, planning for coordination across at least four early childhood programs and funding streams, was addressed in Section 2.1.2.

5.2.1 Status of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop research-based early learning guidelines (content standards) regarding language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts for three to five year-olds.

- ☐ **Planning.** The State is planning for the development of early learning guidelines. Expected date of plan completion: _____
- ☐ **Developing.** The State is in the process of developing early learning guidelines. Expected date of completion: _____
- ☐ **Developed.** The State has approved the early learning guidelines, but has not yet developed or initiated an implementation plan. The early learning guidelines are included as Attachment ____
- ☐ **Implementing.** In addition to having developed early learning guidelines, the State has embarked on implementation efforts, which may include dissemination, training or embedding guidelines in the professional development system. The guidelines are included as Attachment ____
- (X) **Revising.** A State has previously developed early learning guidelines and is now revising those guidelines. The guidelines are included as **Attachment H.**
- ☐ **Other (describe):**

Describe the progress made by the State in developing voluntary guidelines for early learning since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

For the past year, the Arizona Department of Education has coordinated a team of over 50 early childhood practitioners and stakeholders to conduct a review and subsequent revision of the Arizona Early Childhood Education Standards. Team representatives include those from all facets of Arizona's early childhood community, including state agencies, private child care providers, State School Readiness Board, Head Start programs, Native American communities and public schools. Initial feedback was solicited from parents, teachers, administrators and community representatives before the revision process began, and then after the draft revision was finalized. The revised standards were renamed "Arizona Early Learning Standards" and presented to the State Board of Education for adoption in April 2005, and approved in May 2005.

If developed, are the guidelines aligned with K-12 content standards?

☒ Yes. If yes, describe.

☐ No.

Every standard in the Arizona Early Learning Standards document is aligned to Arizona's K-12 Academic Standards. The revised Early Learning Standards are formatted to reflect the same nomenclature as the K-12 Standards (Standard, Strand, and Concept), and a matrix showing alignment of each Early Learning Concept to the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and the AZ Kindergarten Concepts is included for every standard.

The domain and content areas include: Social and Emotional Development; Language & Literacy, Mathematics; Physical Development and Health & Safety; Social Studies; Science; and the Arts.

Please attach a copy of the guidelines. If the guidelines are available on the web, provide the appropriate Web site address – www.ade.az.gov/earlychildhood/elstandards.asp

5.2.2 Domains of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning. Do the guidelines address language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do the guidelines address domains not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart*, such as social/emotional, cognitive, physical, health, creative arts, or other domains?

☒ Yes. If yes, describe.

☐ No

The Arizona Early Learning Standards include the domains and content areas of Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development and Healthy & Safety; Social Studies; Science; and the Arts.

Have guidelines been developed for children in age groups not specifically included in *Good Start, Grow Smart* (children other than those aged three to five)?

☐ Yes. If yes, describe.

☒ No

- 5.2.3 Implementation of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** Describe the process the State used or expects to use in **implementing** its early learning guidelines. How are (or will) community, cultural, linguistic and individual variations, as well as the diversity of child care settings (be) acknowledged in implementation? Materials developed to support implementation of the guidelines are included as Attachment (not available currently).

The Arizona Early Learning Standards were developed for use by parents, educators and child care providers in all types of early care and education settings in Arizona. The practitioners and stakeholders that participated in the revision process were selected for their geographic, racial, ethnic, and programmatic diversity in order to create a document that would be a useful resource for all early care and education providers. The revised document contains specific information addressing the use of the Standards with English Language Learners and children with special needs.

Professional development on use of the revised Standards will begin June 2005, and will continue to be delivered through a variety of methods: train-the-trainer modules; on-line presentation; conferences and meetings; and college coursework. The Department of Education has convened an Early Learning Standards Professional Development Advisory Group with representatives of varied early care and education programs in the state to guide professional development efforts.

- 5.2.4 Assessment of Voluntary Guidelines for Early Learning.** As applicable, describe the State's plan for **assessing** the effectiveness and/or implementation of the guidelines. Written reports of these efforts are included as Attachment (not available currently).

The Arizona Department of Education has convened an Early Childhood Assessment Work Group that is representational of the varied early care and education programs in the state. The Work Group is currently developing a resource that will include information on assessment, best practices and lists of appropriate assessment instruments. Included in this resource will be information on assessments that inform program planning and help guide instruction, which is a measure of how effectively the Early Learning Standards are used to design curriculum and provide learning opportunities.

The Work Group document will be published and distributed in Fall 2005.

5.2.5 State Plans for Professional Development. Indicate which of the following best describes the current status of the State's efforts to develop a professional development plan for early childhood providers that includes all the primary sectors: child care, Head Start, and public education.

- ☒ **Planning.** Indicate whether steps are under way to develop a plan. If so, describe the time frames for completion and/or implementation, the steps anticipated, and how the plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ **Developing.** A plan is being drafted. Draft is included as Attachment ____
- ☐ **Developed.** A plan has been written but has not yet been implemented. The plan is included as Attachment ____
- ☐ **Implementing.** A plan has been written and is now in the process of being implemented. The plan is included as Attachment ____
- ☐ **Other (describe):**

Steps are underway in Arizona to develop a professional development plan for early care and education providers/practitioners. It is anticipated that the plan will be completed within state fiscal year 2006. Stakeholders, including state institutions of higher education, public and private child care providers, family care providers, community based professional development and training agencies, state agencies and public preschool programs will be involved in the development of the plan. The State School Readiness Board and the Department of Economic Security will continue to guide the development of the plan. A Professional Leadership Implementation Team or Policy Work Group, comprised of stakeholders, will be convened to monitor and track professional development activities and to develop the plan; they will report to the School Readiness Board (SRB). The plan is expected to support early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts by incorporating the core knowledge elements and competencies into the workshops, training and coursework offered to practitioners and through continued collaboration with the Arizona Department of Education and the Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education Articulation Task Forces.

Describe the progress made by the State in a plan for professional development since the date of submission of the 2004-2005 State Plan.

Via formal and informal mechanisms, the School Readiness Board and the DES Child Care Administration receives ongoing input and guidance from various entities/stakeholders regarding aspects of the emerging professional development plan.

In particular the DES Child Care Advisory Committee and the School Readiness Board Professional Leadership Implementation Team have been instrumental in continuing to highlight the need for a statewide plan and have provide input into the beginning stages of the development of this plan. Stakeholder involvement includes, but is not limited to the following: community-based agencies that serve children and families; state agencies; Head Start grantees; institutes of higher education, including universities and community colleges; Child Care Resource and Referral agencies; tribal partners; informal care providers and networks, including kith and kin programs; center based child care staff; public schools; family child care provider organizations; business community representatives; philanthropic organizations; and elected officials.

Due to the broad based representation of the committees and the Implementation Team, and given that all Implementation Team Meetings are open to the public, practitioners and interested parties are given the opportunity to express their viewpoints and perspectives. Practitioners have included: certified family child care homes including those participating in the federally funded Child and Adult Care Food Program; center and school based child care programs; out of school time programs; Head Start programs; and public preschool programs.

Many barriers continue to thwart the continued professional development and education of early care and education practitioners. Among these is access to training and coursework, funding sources to pay for professional development, transportation to and from professional development sites, an under-preparedness for successfully completing college work and in some cases, lack of fluency in English. Many are balancing full-time work, caring for families, time for classes/workshops/training and time to prepare and study. Consequently, a continuum of community-based training and education is offered at no cost to practitioners. Training is offered both on-site and off-site. Some training topics are offered in both Spanish and English and may also lead to college credit and/or certification.

For example, Child Care Professional Training (CCPT) is a 60-hour community-based training offered throughout Arizona. The training focuses on improving the preparation and knowledge of practitioners. Specifically, CCPT is designed for individuals who are entering the field or lack basic early childhood knowledge. CCPT includes six hours of coursework leading to first aide and CPR certification with an additional 54 hours of introductory early childhood coursework. In some instances, CCPT training may be articulated for community college credit.

Additionally, other community-based trainings are offered to introduce practitioners to a variety of topics. These topics encompass at least two of the Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies outlined by Arizona's training registry system - the Statewide Child Care and Early Education Development System (S★CCEEDS). The Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies define the knowledge, skills and attributes desirable for a child care and early education practitioner.

Since a wide variety of community based training is offered to meet the unique needs of practitioners in Arizona, the professional development plan will address the articulation of community based training into college credit for practitioners. For many practitioners, community-based training offered for college credit will help to build the confidence needed to pursue additional educational opportunities that may lead to certification and/or a degree.

Articulation will be defined in the professional development plan to include the awarding of credit for community based training, as well as the transfer of credit between institutions in the community college system and from that system to the state university system. It involves linking together programs, faculty and instructors, in order to facilitate a normal progression and smooth transition through the education system while maintaining continuity in a student's academic program. Articulation agreements, typically formal agreements between two campuses, define how courses taken at one college or university campus can be used to satisfy a subject matter requirement at another college or university campus.

Articulation is a key issue in the professional development plan for the following reasons: 1) There is a growing demand for quality child care and preschool programs and for staff trained in child development and appropriate child and family practices; 2) Early Care and Education practitioners may take any number of career pathways and encounter a number of transition points within their professional development sequence; 3) Children who are being served in child care and early education programs are increasingly more diverse, requiring the recruitment,

training and education of diverse staff; and 4) Practitioners' professional development is important to advancing issues related to compensation in the child care and early education field.

To address the issue of articulation, a Professional Leadership Implementation Team (PLIT) participates in Early Childhood Education and the Elementary Education statewide articulation taskforces. These articulation task forces are designed to strengthen existing articulation agreements between community colleges and universities.

PLIT members include Early Care and Education representatives from each of the state universities, as well as Early Care and Education representatives from five of the state's community colleges and the Maricopa Community College District. These members act as a conduit to share information and inform the relevant higher education articulation task forces in Arizona.

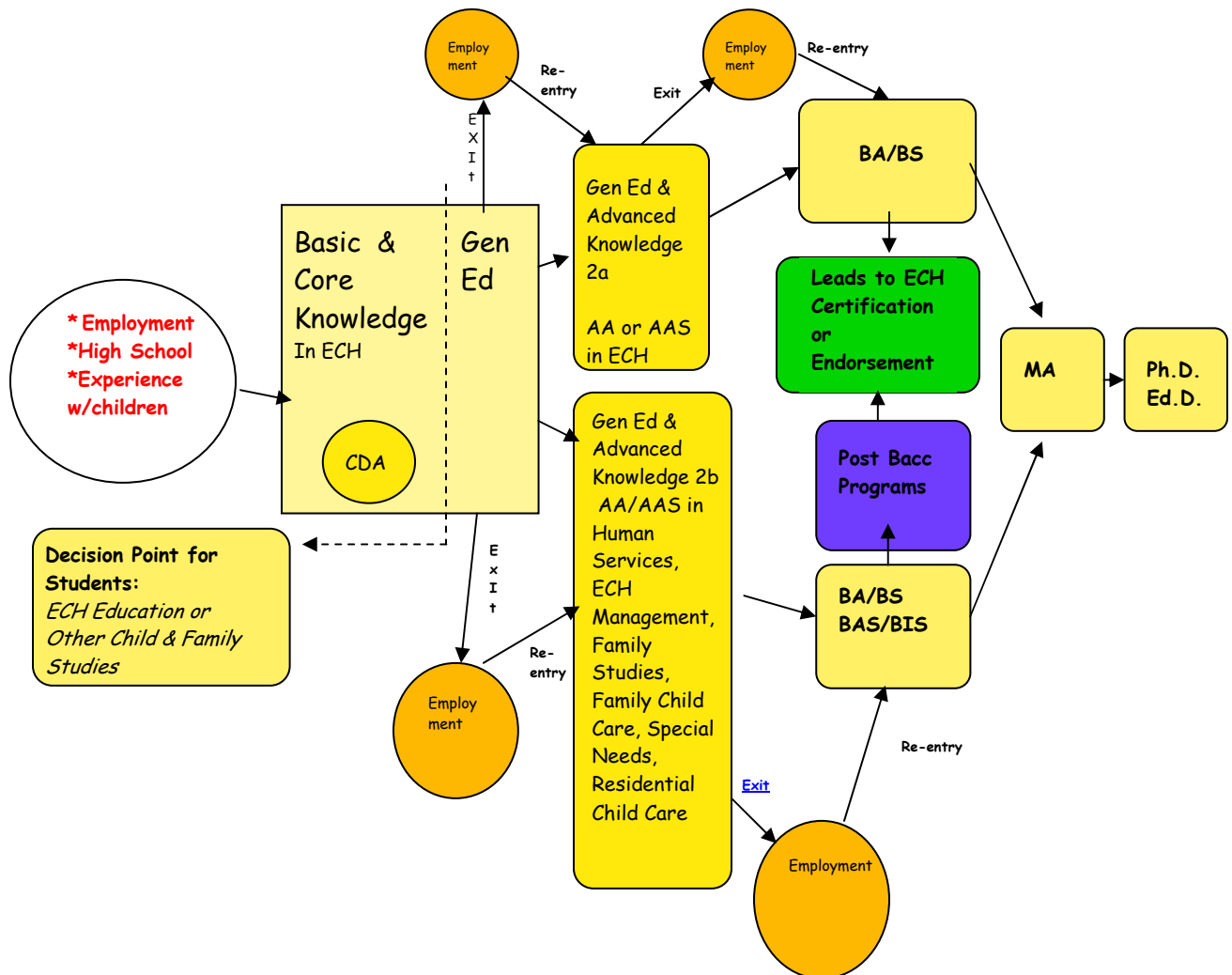
In order to increase the number of qualified early educators in the State of Arizona, the Professional Leadership Implementation Team determined that it was critical to identify the educational pathways that individuals may take to move toward early childhood teacher certification or other early childhood professional development and training. These pathways call for a body of CORE KNOWLEDGE common to ALL early care and education practitioners.

To identify the necessary CORE KNOWLEDGE, a Standard Matrix was developed comparing the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards, Head Start Standards, S*CCEEDS Competencies, and the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AZEIP) Standards. The Task Force then determined that the content represented by the overlap of standards would constitute the CORE body of KNOWLEDGE.

The identified Educational Pathways* and the Standards Matrix have been accepted by the Early Childhood Education and the Elementary Education Articulation Task Forces in October, 2004.

***Note:** The courses contained in the pathways are intended to articulate with state universities such that students are guaranteed that all coursework and credits will transfer and apply to the designated baccalaureate degree(s).

Early Childhood Education Pathways



The Early Childhood Education Pathways identify various components of professional development and recognizes that individuals may come to the field of early education in a variety of ways. They may enter straight from high school, from employment, from their volunteer experience or child-rearing experiences. All components included in the pathways provide knowledge and skills that are beneficial to early childhood practitioners in their interactions with young children and their families. No matter the point of entry, each individual needs to acquire this CORE body of KNOWLEDGE to be successful.

When this CORE KNOWLEDGE is acquired, through college coursework, an individual has several options. She/he may obtain a "CORE KNOWLEDGE" certificate of completion or the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, or continue professional development by taking General Education coursework and additional Early Childhood content coursework leading to an AA degree in Early Childhood Education, Human Services, Family Studies, etc. Individuals may

also choose to further their education, beyond the two-year degree, by pursuing a baccalaureate degree with one of the participating institutions of higher education.

One task for the Early Childhood Education Articulation Task Force is to address horizontal and vertical articulation for Child Care Professional Training (CCPT) and the Arizona Infant Toddler Institute (AITI). Currently, some Community Colleges in Arizona offer practitioners three college credits for the completion of the CCPT and AITI courses. This universal approach of these articulation decisions is necessary, as the state professional development plan will need to address the articulation of community-based training to the higher education institutions. The Early Childhood Education Articulation Task Force is addressing two additional tasks: the development of a framework for a new Early Care and Education AA degree that leads to BA level state certification and the development of recommendations to improve the alignment of the AAS degree to the BAS/BIS degree.

The PLIT will continue to track the progress of the State-wide Articulation Task Forces, while continuing to be instrumental in the ongoing development of the state professional development plan.

In Arizona, Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies have not only been developed by a diverse group of community stakeholders, but they have been implemented into Arizona's voluntary statewide professional development registry, S☆CCEEDS.

Research indicates that offering training and educational opportunities that promote professional growth and development is fundamental in encouraging practitioners to improve their skills and qualifications. S☆CCEEDS addresses program quality using a trainer registry and training registry system.

S☆CCEEDS listed trainers will play a vital role in preparing practitioners to best meet the needs of the children and families they serve. Minimum qualifications for S☆CCEEDS listed trainers were established and agreed upon by a broad based group of community stakeholders who participated in the Professional Development Committee.

S☆CCEEDS listed trainers must achieve a minimum Career Level of III-A on the Arizona lattice system. The requirement for a Career Level III-A is one of the following: 1) A Child Development Associates (CDA) credential or a Certified Child Care Professional (CCP) credential or a Certified Professional in Child Care (CPC) credential, or a National Administrators Credential (NAC) or equivalent; 2) Twelve credit hours in early childhood education or child development; or 3) One hundred and eighty clock hours of training.

Standards for S☆CCEEDS trainers were established and agreed upon by the broad based group of community stakeholders who participated in the Professional Development Committee.

S☆CCEEDS listed trainings must address at least two of the Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies. S☆CCEEDS listed trainings can only be conducted by S☆CCEEDS listed trainers.

Additionally, the following information is required for all S☆CCEEDS listed trainings: Trainer information; Agency information; Training information; Course description; Course outline; Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies; Level of training content; Child age group; Target audience; Training format; Competency assessment; and Number of clock hours.

The Professional Development Plan will address early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy in various ways. First, the S☆CCEEDS database tracks the number of training opportunities offered related to early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy using the Core

Knowledge Elements and Competencies that must be submitted for each S☆CCEEDS listed training.

Additionally, the Arizona School Readiness Board is outlining how our state will ensure that all children begin school ready to succeed. Developing and promoting scientifically based professional development opportunities that address early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy is essential to school readiness. Consequently, the Professional Leadership Implementation Team will continue to explore how early language, literacy, pre-reading, and numeracy can be further addressed in our state professional development plan.

Early childhood education has become a part of a standards based environment. The focus on standards reflects the growing consensus among early childhood professionals that greater emphasis be placed on young children's conceptual learning, especially acquisition of language and literacy.

By developing and implementing standards, early childhood educators ensure that a consistent set of identified core knowledge and skills become a part of every child's preschool years. The professional development plan recognizes that these results can only be achieved if early learning standards meet the following essential features:

- An emphasis on significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes;
- Developed and reviewed using informed and inclusive processes;
- Use implementation and assessment strategies that are ethical and appropriate for young children; and
- Are accompanied by strong supports for child care and early education programs, professional and families.

The development of Early Learning Standards began in 2001, and a revision of the Standards was completed in 2005. Arizona's early learning standards are commonly referred to as early childhood standards. The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is the lead on establishing these standards. The standards reflect the belief that certain knowledge and skills are essential to every child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

The standards are the result of a long process of research and critical review. The resulting document represents a synthesis of exemplary practice and experience modeled in programs and practices that have been empirically validated by thousands of young children throughout the nation.

The Arizona Early Childhood Education Standards must now be incorporated into the existing plan for professional development. The State School Readiness Board's the Professional Leadership Implementation Team will review the standards for compatibility with the S☆CCEEDS professional development system's Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies. Additionally, they will ensure that essential features of the Early Learning Guidelines drive the integration into the existing state professional development plan.

Plan not yet developed.

If your State has developed a plan for professional development, does the plan include:	Yes	No
A link to Early Learning Guidelines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuum of training and education to form a career path	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Articulation from one type of training to the next	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of trainers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality assurance through approval of training content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A system to track practitioners' training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment or evaluation of training effectiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Credentials – Please state for which roles (e.g. infant and toddler credential, directors' credential, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialized strategies to reach family, friend and neighbor caregivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For each Yes response, reference the page(s) in the plan and briefly describe the Lead Agency's efforts.

For each No response, indicate whether the Lead Agency intends to incorporate these components.

Are the opportunities available:	Yes	No
Statewide	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Center-based Child Care Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Group Home Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To Family Home Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To In-Home Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (describe):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Describe how the plan addresses early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.

Are program or provider-level incentives offered to encourage provider training and education?

- ☐ Yes. Describe, including any connections between the incentives and training relating to early language, literacy, pre-reading and early math concepts.
- ☐ No. If no, is there any plan to offer incentives to encourage provider training and education?

Although, an overall statewide professional development plan is in the planning process, many key components currently exist and offer at platform for further development and expansion.

Monetary incentives currently are in place for achieving higher career levels on the career lattice system described as follows: In August 2001 the Department of Economic Security Child Care Administration entered into a contract with the Association for Supportive Child Care to develop and establish Arizona's Voluntary Career Lattice System, now known as S★CCEEDS. This contract was designed to support and encourage the professional growth and development of child care and early education practitioners. S★CCEEDS will enable practitioners to track their training, education and experience over the course of their careers.

In order to promote participation in S★CCEEDS practitioners may receive a monetary incentive for initially joining the registry. Additionally, practitioners may receive a monetary incentive for achieving higher career levels on the lattice. At this time, S★CCEEDS does not have any incentives linked to the early language, literacy, pre-reading and numeracy.

What are the expected **outcomes** of the State's professional development plan and efforts to improve the skills of child care providers? As applicable, how does (or will) the State assess the effectiveness of its plan and efforts? If so, how does (or will) the State use assessment to help shape its professional development plan and training/education for child care providers?

The expected outcomes of the professional development plan include a better-trained and educated workforce caring for children in child care and early education programs. Arizona recognizes that professional development is cornerstone to providing quality care for the children and families in our state.

An assessment of the professional development plan will be developed around the following outcomes:

- **A continuation of existing stakeholder involvement and the development of additional stakeholders where there is limited participation. This will be accomplished using informal and formal mechanisms to ensure and continue the broad based support for the professional development plan.**
- **The ongoing provision of a continuum of training for all categories of child care and early education practitioners. The continuum of training and type of providers accessing training can be tracked using the S★CCEEDS database.**
- **Continued participation in relevant discussions related to articulation in the community. Over the next several years, work will be directed toward creating an academic plan with the higher education community that focuses on articulation: Specifically, work will be directed toward the articulation of the community-based training for Child Care**

Professional Training and the Arizona Infant Toddler Institute into college credit for practitioners.

- **Continued addressing of program quality via the S★CCEEDS training and trainer registry system to ensure that the Core Knowledge Elements and Competencies continue to be relevant in the changing professional development landscape. The S★CCEEDS Policy Committee will review national and state resources related to professional development (e.g. State Early Childhood Standards and Standards for Early Childhood Preparation published by The National Association for the Education of Young Children).**
- **A continued emphasis to address early language, literacy, pre-reading and numeracy professional development opportunities by tracking the number of training opportunities using the S★CCEEDS database.**
- **Ensuring that the Early Learning Standard developers, relevant professional associations and community stakeholders create multiple opportunities for discussion and exchange regarding integration of the standards into the professional development plan. The standards will be reviewed and revised on a regular basis.**

The efforts of the professional development plan will be assessed in three ways. First, DES will work with the Arizona State School Readiness Board and Policy Implementation Teams in the formal assessment and statewide integration of the professional development plan. Second, DES will utilize the Child Care Advisory Committee as a resource to assess the various aspects of the professional development plan using both formal and informal mechanisms. Finally, input and feedback will be obtained from contractors who perform work related to professional development on an on-going basis.

Based on the feedback received, the assessment results will be used to inform and direct the type of training and education available for child care and early education practitioners. Additionally, the assessment will be used to quantify the effectiveness of the professional development plan for child care and early education practitioners in Arizona.

PART 6
HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

(Only the 50 States and the District of Columbia complete Part 6.)

The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care (NRCHSCC) of DHHS's Maternal and Child Health Bureau supports a comprehensive, current, on-line listing of the licensing and regulatory requirements for child care in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. In lieu of requiring a State Lead Agency to provide information that is already publicly available, ACF accepts this compilation as accurately reflecting the States' licensing requirements. The listing, which is maintained by the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center School of Nursing, is available on the World Wide Web at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/>.

6.1 Health and Safety Requirements for Center-Based Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, §98.16(j))

6.1.1 Are all center-based providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation?

- ☒ Yes. Answer 6.1.2, skip 6.1.3, and go to 6.2.
☐ No. Answer 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

*** Center based providers on Tribal or military land would be required to meet any applicable Tribal or military requirements**

6.1.2 Have center licensing requirements as relates to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since approval of the last State Plan?
(§98.41(a)(2)&(3))

- ☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:
☒ No

6.1.3 For center-based care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.2 Health and Safety Requirements for Group Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.2.1 Are all group home providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

☒ Yes. Answer 6.2.2, skip 6.2.3, and go to 6.3.

☐ No. Answer 6.2.2 and 6.2.3.

- **Group Home providers on Tribal or military land would be required to meet any applicable Tribal or military requirements.**

6.2.2 Have group home licensing requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:

☒ No

6.2.3 For group home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.3 Health and Safety Requirements for Family Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.3.1 Are all family child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under State law that is indicated in the NRCHSCC's compilation? If:

☒ Yes. Answer 6.3.2, skip 6.3.3, and go to 6.4.

☐ No. Answer 6.3.2 and 6.3.3.

- *** Family home child care providers on Tribal or military land would be required to meet applicable Tribal or military requirements.**

6.3.2 Have family child care provider requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or staff training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:

(X) No

6.3.3 For family care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.4 Health and Safety Requirements for In-Home Providers (658E(c)(2)(F), §§98.41, 98.16(j))

6.4.1 Are all in-home child care providers paid with CCDF funds subject to licensing under the State law reflected in the NRCHSCC's compilation referenced above?

(X) Yes. Answer 6.4.2, skip 6.4.3, and go to 6.5.

☐ No. Answer 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

- **In home child care providers on Tribal or military land would be required to meet applicable Tribal or military requirements**

6.4.2 Have in-home health and safety requirements that relate to staff-child ratios, group size, or training been modified since the approval of the last State Plan? (§98.41(a)(2) & (3))

☐ Yes, and the changes are as follows:

(X) No

6.4.3 For in-home care that is NOT licensed, and therefore not reflected in NRCHSCC's compilation, the following health and safety requirements apply to child care services provided under the CCDF for:

- The prevention and control of infectious disease (including age-appropriate immunizations)
- Building and physical premises safety
- Health and safety training

6.5 Exemptions to Health and Safety Requirements

At Lead Agency option, the following relatives: grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, or siblings (who live in a separate residence from the child in care) may be exempted from health and safety requirements. (658P(4)(B), §98.41(a)(1)(ii)(A))
Indicate the Lead Agency's policy regarding these relative providers:

- ☐ All relative providers are subject to the same requirements as described in sections 6.1 - 6.4 above, as appropriate; there are **no exemptions** for relatives or different requirements for them.
- ☐ All relative providers are **exempt** from all health and safety requirements.
- (X) **Some or all** relative providers are subject to different health and safety requirements from those described in sections 6.1 - 6.4. The following describes those requirements and identifies the relatives they apply to:

Providers who are grandparents (including great-grandparents), aunts and uncles (including great-aunts and great-uncles) or siblings (who are not otherwise required) may choose not to meet health and safety requirements described in sections 6.1 – 6.4 above. These providers are referred to as Non-Certified Relative Providers (NCRP). Regardless if they care for children in their own home or the children's home, NCRPs are not subject to licensing. They are however subject to health and safety requirements and these requirements are different than those described in Sections 6.1 – 6.4. The requirements for NCRPs are as follows.

- **NCRPs shall certify that they are not awaiting trial on and have never been convicted of or admitted committing any criminal offenses specified in state statute and that they have not committed any act of sexual abuse of a child.**
- **NCRPs shall certify that they are not the parent or guardian of a child adjudicated to be a dependent child, as defined by state statute.**
- **NCRPs shall certify that they have not been denied for cause a license to operate a facility for the care of children in this or another state, nor had a license or certification to operate such a facility revoked.**

NCRPs shall also be in compliance with state statutory fingerprint requirements as discussed in Section 6.6.

6.6 Enforcement of Health and Safety Requirements

Each Lead Agency is required to certify that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided comply with all applicable health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(E), §§98.40(a)(2), 98.41(d)) The following is a description of how health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

- Are child care providers subject to routine unannounced visits (i.e., not specifically for the purpose of complaint investigation or issuance/renewal of a license)?
 - (X) Yes, and the following indicates the providers subject to routine unannounced visits and the frequency of those visits:
 - **Child care centers are subject to unannounced visits once per year.**
 - **Group homes are subject to unannounced visits two times per year.**
 - **Family child care homes are subject to two visits per year, one of which is unannounced.**
 - **In-home providers are subject to two visits per year, one of which is unannounced and when permission to do so is obtained from the child's parent.**
 - **Non-certified relative providers are not subject to visits.**
 - ☐ No
- Are child care providers subject to background checks?
 - (X) Yes, and the following types of providers are subject to background checks (indicate when such checks are conducted):
 - **Child care centers: A state and federal fingerprint background check is required for: Applicant for Licensee and all personnel including any volunteers.**
 - **Group homes: A state and federal fingerprint background check is required for: Applicant for Certificate, all personnel including any volunteers and any other household member 18 years of age or older.**
 - **Family child care homes: A state and federal fingerprint background check is required for the provider, a designated back-up provider and any other household member 18 years of age or older. Additionally, the provider, designated back-up and other household members must clear a state child protective services background check.**
 - **In-home providers: A state and federal fingerprint background check is required for the provider and a designated back-up provider. Additionally, the provider and designated back-up must clear a state child protective services background check.**
 - **Non-certified relative providers: A state and federal fingerprint background check is required for the provider.**

☐ No

- Does the State require that child care providers report serious injuries that occur while a child is in care? (Serious injuries are defined as injuries requiring medical treatment by a doctor, nurse, dentist, or other medical professional.)
(X) Yes, how such injuries are tracked (if applicable):

(X) No

- ***Child care centers: No reporting requirement.**
- ***Group homes: No reporting requirement.**
- **Family child care homes: Report required to be made to DES Child Care Administration. Reports documented in provider's ongoing file.**
- **In-home providers: Report required to be made to DES Child Care Administration. Reports documented in provider's ongoing file.**
- ***Non-certified relative providers: No reporting requirement.**
- Other methods used to ensure that health and safety requirements are effectively enforced:

Additionally, provider enforcement meetings and actions are held and taken as necessary and technical assistance and training is provided when warranted.

6.7 Exemptions from Immunization Requirements

The State assures that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendations for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))

The State exempts the following children from immunization (check all that apply):

- (X) Children who are cared for by relatives (defined as grandparents, great grandparents, siblings (if living in a separate residence), aunts and uncles).
- ☐ Children who receive care in their own homes.
- (X) Children whose parents object to immunization on religious grounds.
- (X) Children whose medical condition contraindicates immunization.

APPENDIX 1

PROGRAM ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

The Lead Agency, named in Part 1 of this Plan, assures that:

- (1) upon approval, it will have in effect a program that complies with the provisions of the Plan printed herein, and is administered in accordance with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 as amended, Section 418 of the Social Security Act, and all other applicable Federal laws and regulations. (658D(b), 658E(a))
- (2) the parent(s) of each eligible child within the State who receives or is offered child care services for which financial assistance is provided is given the option either to enroll such child with a child care provider that has a grant or contract for the provision of the service; or to receive a child care certificate. (658E(c)(2)(A)(i))
- (3) in cases in which the parent(s) elects to enroll the child with a provider that has a grant or contract with the Lead Agency, the child will be enrolled with the eligible provider selected by the parent to the maximum extent practicable. (658E(c)(2)(A)(ii))
- (4) the child care certificate offered to parents shall be of a value commensurate with the subsidy value of child care services provided under a grant or contract. (658E(c)(2)(A)(iii))
- (5) with respect to State and local regulatory requirements, health and safety requirements, payment rates, and registration requirements, State or local rules, procedures or other requirements promulgated for the purpose of the Child Care and Development Fund will not significantly restrict parental choice among categories of care or types of providers. (658E(c)(2)(A), §98.15(p), §98.30(g), §98.40(b)(2), §98.41(b), §98.43(c), §98.45(d))
- (6) that children receiving services under the CCDF are age-appropriately immunized, and that the health and safety provisions regarding immunizations incorporate (by reference or otherwise) the latest recommendation for childhood immunizations of the State public health agency. (§98.41(a)(1))
- (7) that CCDF Discretionary funds are used to supplement, not supplant, State general revenue funds for child care assistance for low-income families. (P.L. 106-554)

The Lead Agency also certifies that:

- (1) it has procedures in place to ensure that providers of child care services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund afford parents unlimited access to their children and to the providers caring for their children during the normal hours of operations and whenever such children are in the care of such providers. (658E(c)(2)(B))
- (2) it maintains a record of substantiated parental complaints and makes information regarding such complaints available to the public on request. (658E(c)(2)(C))
- (3) it will collect and disseminate to parents of eligible children and the general public, consumer education information that will promote informed child care choices. (658E(c)(2)(D))
- (4) it has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided in the State. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (5) there are in effect within the State (or other area served by the Lead Agency), under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children; these requirements are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available under the Child Care and Development Fund. (658E(c)(2)(E))
- (6) procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers of services for which assistance is provided under the Child Care and Development Fund comply with all applicable State or local health and safety requirements. (658E(c)(2)(G))
- (7) payment rates under the Child Care and Development Fund for the provision of child care services are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to comparable child care services in the State or sub-State area that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this program or under any other Federal or State child care assistance programs. (658E(c)(4)(A))

APPENDIX 2 ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY TERMINOLOGY

For purposes of determining eligibility and priority for CCDF-funded child care services, lead agencies must define the following *italicized* terms. (658P, 658E(c)(3)(B))

(1) *attending* (a job training or educational program; include minimum hours if applicable) - means to be present, at an activity outside of the individual's home, on a regular and acceptable basis, as determined by the trainer or educator.

(2) *in loco parentis* - means an individual who: has legal guardianship or who has initiated the process of legal guardianship; or is a caretaker relative who exercises responsibility for the day-to-day physical care, guidance and support of a child who physically resides with the relative and who is by affinity or consanguinity or by court decree a grandparent, great-grandparent, sibling of the whole or half blood, stepbrother, stepsister, aunt, uncle, great-aunt, great-uncle or first cousin.

(3) *job training and educational program* - means participation in an activity outside of the individual's home, which is a structured program (with a goal of, or in preparation for, employment) as follows:

a. High school or its equivalent or remedial education activities reasonably related to obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent if the individual engaged in the activity is a teen parent.

b. DES Jobs/MAXIMUS approved education/training activities. If an individual is a TANF recipient and is required to participate in the DES Jobs or Arizona Works program, child care services for any job training and educational program must be approved by the Jobs or MAXIMUS program.

c. Other education and training activities (listed in i. through iv. below) if the eligible parent who needs care is working a monthly average of at least 20 hours per week, the education and training activity is related to an employment goal and the student maintains satisfactory progress and remains in good standing with the educational institution:

i) Attendance at college or trade/vocational activities

ii) Attendance at structured work readiness activities (typically involving structured classes and employment preparation activities)

iii) Attendance at high school, General Educational Development (G.E.D.) classes, English for Speakers of Other Languages (E.S.O.L.) classes or remedial educational activities

iv) Lab classes

(4) *physical or mental incapacity* (if the Lead Agency provides such services to children age 13 and older) –**Not Applicable**

(5) *protective services* - means: a) A child and/or family receiving services from DES Child Protective Services (CPS) and referred for child care services on a case by case basis; or b) Special Circumstances families who are unable to provide child care for a portion of a twenty-four hour day due to a crisis situation of domestic violence or homelessness, a physical, mental, emotional, or medical condition, or participation in a drug treatment or drug rehabilitation program or court ordered community service.

(6) *residing with* -means to live in the same household of a parent, guardian or other person standing in loco parentis and who has legal responsibility for the child.

(7) *special needs child* - means a child who needs increased supervision, modified equipment, modified activities, or a modified facility, within a child care setting, due to any physical, mental sensory, or emotional delay, or medical condition, and includes a child with a disability.

(8) *very low income* - means an income level at or below 100 % of the Federal Poverty Level, as determined by the DES Child Care Administration.

(9) *working* (include minimum hours if applicable) - means the performance of duties on a regular basis for wages or monetary compensation.

- Additional terminology related to conditions of eligibility or priority established by the Lead Agency:

(10) *Transitional Child Care (TCC)* - means child care assistance offered to families who: a) have received TANF within six months of application for child care services; b) apply for services within six months of TANF case closure; c) are in need of child care because they are working; and d) have income that does not exceed the income level used to limit eligibility as defined in the table at Section 3.3.1. Eligibility for TCC may continue for up to 24 months following TANF case closure.

(11) *Non-Certified Relative Provider (NCRP)* -means those providers identified in Section 6.5.

(12) *Jobs Program* - means an administrative unit within DES, which is responsible for the administration of a program, which assists TANF recipients prepare for, obtain, and retain employment; or any other entity that contracts with DES to perform the function(s) stated above. DES may also provide services (under this definition) to TANF recipients to enable them to participate in an activity required and approved by a Tribal employment program as a condition of receipt of TANF benefits.